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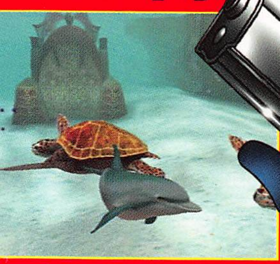


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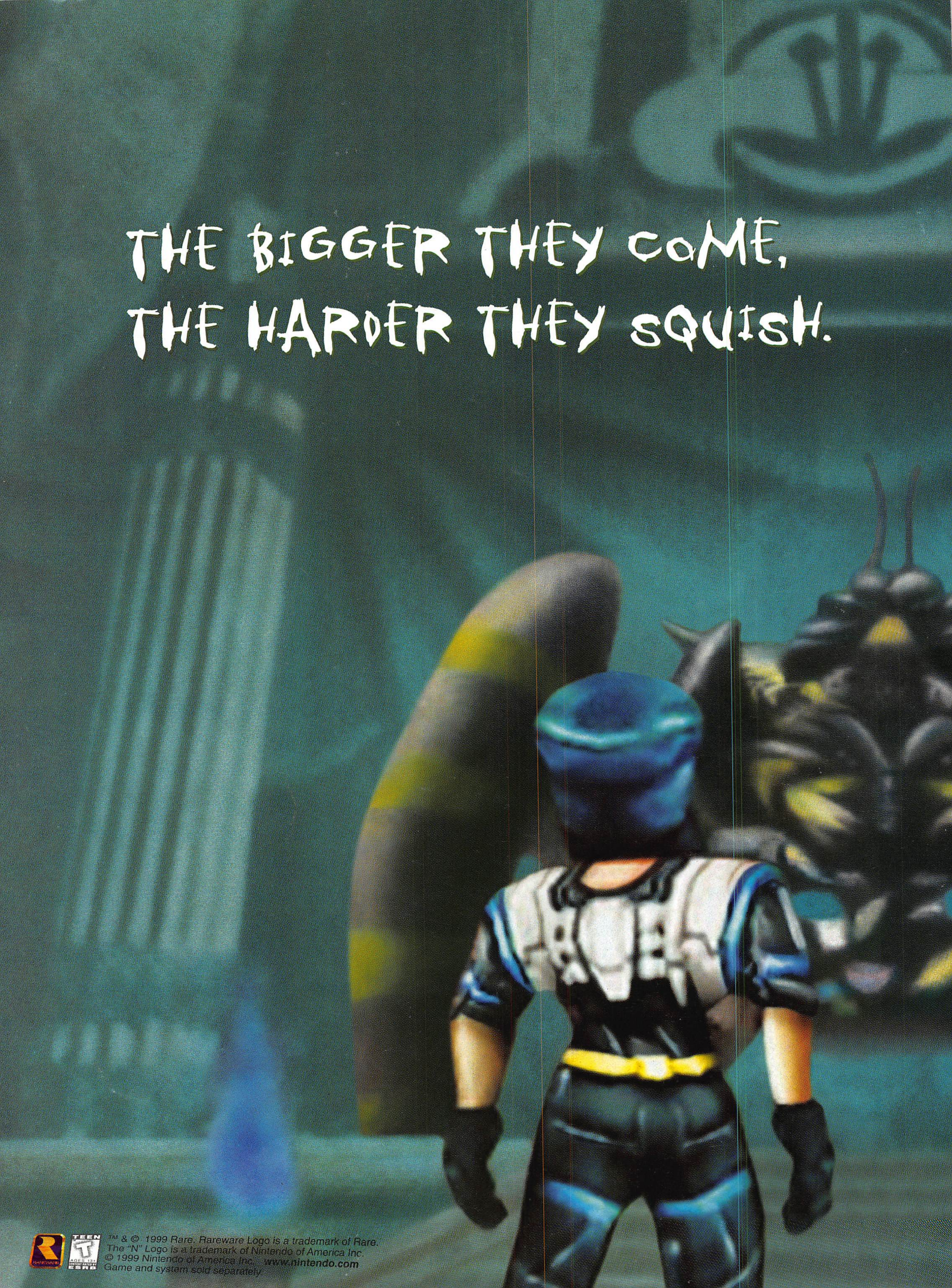


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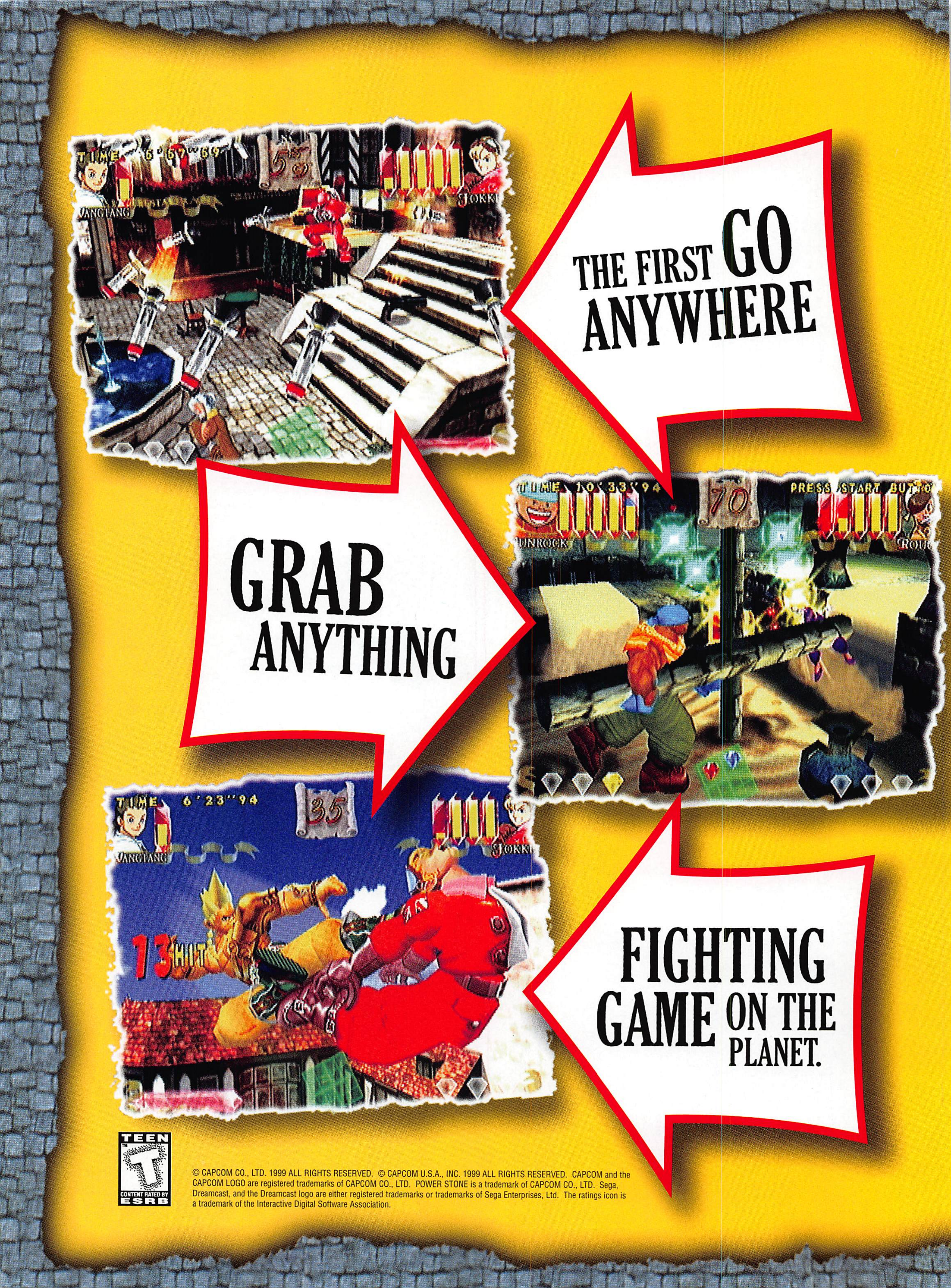
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ISSN# 1092-7212

Whenever I get the chance to speak with one of *GameFan's* more rabid critics, the question that invariably arises (I'm paraphrasing a little here) is "Why don't you guys write more like *x* magazine, instead of like a bunch of fan boys? Don't you have any sense of journalism?" And the short and simple answer to that is 'No, I guess not.' Thing is (and let me stress this so there's no misunderstanding): In all my time as an editor for a video game magazine, I've met exactly **one** person whom I'd consider a true video game journalist (a certain cowboy from the Great White North). The rest of my colleagues at the other mags, websites, etc. are best-case fanboys, and worst-case wannabe journalists (and believe me, I have no problem being labeled a fanboy). In fact, the word "journalist" around the GF offices is routinely scoffed at—even by the guys with journalism degrees.

When it comes down to it, do you really want a group of 'so-called journalists' covering the hobby you love? I don't. I want to know what other gamers think; what they like; and where they're coming from. I don't need somebody with a degree in journalism who thought it might be 'cool' to write for a gaming magazine—people who started playing games with PlayStation. Hell, that's probably what attracted you to—and keeps you coming back to—GF, month-in, month-out. It's clear we don't take ourselves too seriously here (something you can't say about our more rabid 'journalistic' competitors), and we realize that, above all, we're a lucky bunch of guys who just happen to do a job we love. The rest of the mag eds are too busy thinking way too highly of themselves to even realize that they're just a bunch of lucky sods. Listen guys, get off yourselves.

In fact, I've found that those who consider themselves 'journalists' usually know little-to-nothing about games and more often than not feel the need to constantly prop themselves up as 'responsible' journalists. These are the same people who will post every whiff of a rumor they get online as "confirmed" news (no really, this happens all the time). Now, if I'm a serious 'journalist' and know that something is just a rumor, why would I post it as fact for general consumption? Ah, but how does the old saying go in journalistic circles... that "It's not who gets it right, it's who gets it first." Apparently it's a big part of journalism in the Internet age, when unsubstantiated rumor is blatantly put forth as cold hard reality; it's enough to make me sick (and you too, I'm sure). We all realize that rumors are nowhere near as likely to draw as much traffic (both in print and online) as factual stories are; but the quest to be first often outweighs the need for some shred of integrity and, as 'journalists' are always keen to point out, responsibility.

Not to say we don't make mistakes every now and again just like the rest. Heck, *GF* in the good old days was a veritable treasure trove of unsubstantiated rumor and dis-information. Sure, it was fun to read, but for every rumor or news item that came true, there were 10 that didn't. So to say that we're acutely aware of that reputation makes us just a little more careful than the rest (in my best 'holier than thou' voice).

And another thing: GF's review of Square's *Final Fantasy VIII*. While I've now waded through nearly a mountain of mail on the subject, something still puzzles me. While on the one hand we had a legion of people supporting our honesty in giving an opinion that was apparently contrary to popular belief (minus Eggo, who even though he liked the game, got just as blasted as those that didn't—now that makes sense, doesn't it?), on the other side, a legion of die-hard Square loyalists proclaiming us the "anti-christ" and so on. Hey guys! Lighten up! Just because we didn't blindly follow the pack and make *FFVIII* damn near the game of the year doesn't make us that bad... does it? See folks, that's the fun thing about opinions—everybody's allowed to have one. You loved it? Great! Keep in mind, however, that there are probably as many people that either a) don't care or b) agree with us (no really, they're out there). It's always nice to see *GameFan* as the lightning rod for Internet newsgroups... silly us thought we were losing our edge. We'll just sit on the sidelines and wait for the inevitable *FFVIII* backlash to sweep across the newsgroups like wildfire (it happened with *VII*, it'll happen with *VIII*).

As a final aside, let us know what you think of the latest edition of the *GameFan* crews' alter-egos, all dressed up with a wicked re-design by cover artist extraordinaire Patrick Spaziante. We've opted for a more comic book feel, mainly because of the staggeringly positive response to Mr. Spaziante's blazing covers of the past six months.

Next month, we'll delve more into the aftershock of the *FFVIII* online backlash (while trying not to laugh too hard), sure in the knowledge that "justice will be served."

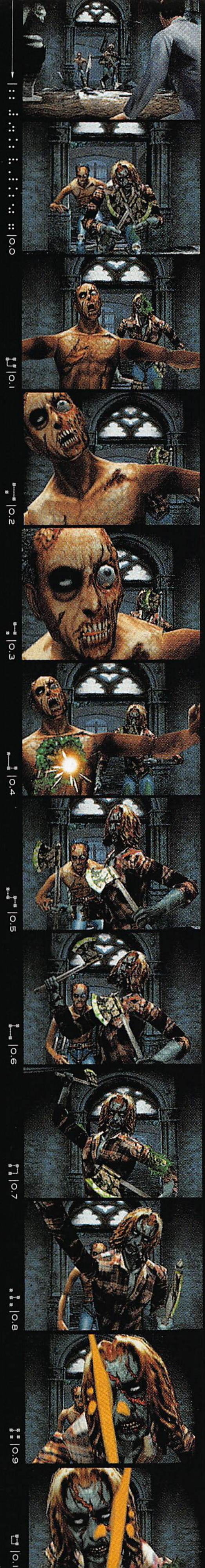
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Eric Mylonas

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COVER STORY



COVER IMAGE BY PATRICK "SPAZ!" SPAZIANTE







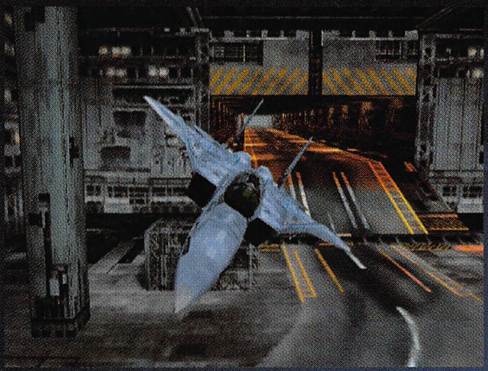




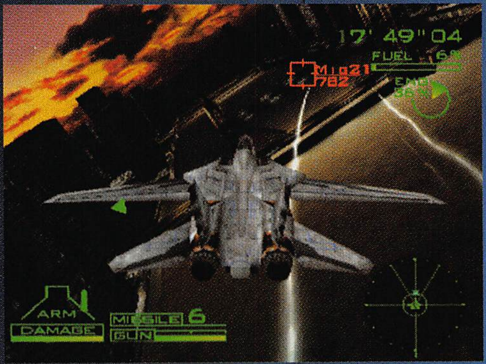
GAME INDEX

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TOP TEN MOST WANTED

October 1999

Star Wars Episode 1: Racer

Publisher: Nintendo



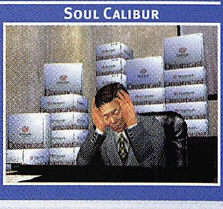
Reader's Top ten

1) *SW Episode 1: Racer* - N64
2) *Star Ocean: The Second Story* - PS
3) *Lunar: Silver Star Story* - PS
4) *Zelda: OOT* - N64
5) *Syphon Filter* - PS
6) *Metal Gear Solid* - PS
7) *Mario Party* - N64
8) *Street Fighter Alpha 3* - PS
9) *GoldenEye* - N64
10) *Xenogears* - PS

Reader's Most Wanted

1) *Shen Mue* - DC
2) *Dino Crisis* - PS
3) *RE: Code Veronica* - DC
4) *Perfect Dark* - N64
5) *Legend of Mana* - PS
6) *Jet Force Gemini* - N64
7) *Castlevania Resur.* - DC
8) *Climax Landers* - DC
9) *Resident Evil 3: Nemesis* - PS
10) *Crash Team Racing* - PS

Soul Calibur



GameFan Editors' Top Ten

*Import title



1) *Soul Calibur* - DC
2) *Zombie Revenge* - DC
3) *Power Stone* - DC
4) *Tempest 2000* - Jaguar
5) *Monster Rancher 2* - PS
6) *Toy Commander* - DC
7) *Yar's Revenge* - Atari 2600
8) *Ogre Battle** - N64
9) *CyberMorph* - Jaguar
10) *Comix Zone* - Genesis



1) *Virtual On 2* - Arcade
2) *Biomotor Unitron** - NGP
3) *Monster Rancher 2* - PS
4) *Soul Calibur* - DC
5) *Puyo Puyo** - NGP
6) *Power Stone* - DC
7) *Star Ocean 2nd Story* - PS
8) *Half-Life* - PC
9) *Frame Gride** - DC
10) *Raiden Fighters Jet* - Arc.



1) *LoK: Soul Reaver* - PS
2) *Silent Scope* - Arcade
3) *Crash Team Racing* - PS
4) *RC Stunt Copter* - PS
5) *Guitar Freaks* - Arcade
6) *Dance Dance Rev.* - Arcade
7) *Trick Style* - DC
8) *Sonic Adventure* - DC
9) *Frame Gride* - DC
10) *Tony Hawk* - PS



1) *Monster Rancher 2* - PS
2) *Final Fantasy VIII* - PS
3) *Quake II* - PC
4) *Resident Evil 3: Nemesis* - PS
5) *Dungeon Keeper 2* - PC
6) *Tetris DX* - GBC
7) *Mario Golf* - N64
8) *Thousand Arms* - PS
9) *Final Fantasy Legend* - GBC
10) *Ballblazer* - C64



1) *Soul Calibur* - DC
2) *UmJammer Lammy* - PS
3) *Crazy Taxi* - Arcade
4) *KoF '99 Dream Match* - DC
5) *Silent Scope* - Arcade
6) *Last Blade 2* - NG
7) *SF3: Third Strike* - Arcade
8) *Yoshi's Island* - SNES
9) *Star Ocean* - PS
10) *Sam & Max Hit the Road* - Mac



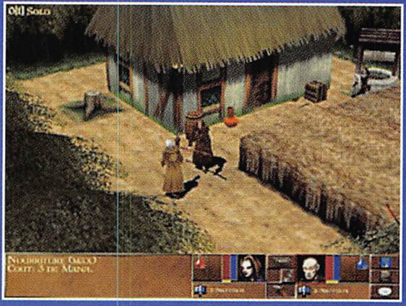
1) *EverQuest* - PC
2) *Monster Rancher 2* - PS
3) *Jet Force Gemini* - N64
4) *Ready 2 Rumble* - DC
5) *Madden 2000* - PS
6) *Quake II* - PC
7) *Tony Hawk* - PS
8) *NCAA Football 2000* - PS
9) *Resident Evil 3: Nemesis* - PS
10) *Gallop Racer** - PS

Developer's Top Ten

This Month's Guest:
Donovan Soto
Assistant Producer, SCEA

1. *Dark Stone* - PC
2. *Crash Team Racing* - PS
3. *Spyro 2: Ripto's Rage* - PS
4. *Tribes* - PC
5. *Everquest* - PC
6. *Driver* - PS
7. *Total Annihilation* - PC
8. *Kingpin* - PC
9. *Worms: Armageddon* - PC
10. *Descent 3* - PC

Dark Stone



Publisher: Sierra

"I am a big RPG and FPS (First Person Shooter) fan. I enjoy FPS for the fast action multiplayer capabilities and good controls and graphics. RPGs are just the opposite—I can relax and play them at whatever pace I feel like. The stories in RPGs are what I enjoy the most about them. *Dark Stone*, a *Diablo* style action/RPG, is what I am currently playing. And *Crash Team Racing* and *Spyro 2: Ripto's Rage!* are the current projects on which I am working."


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EDITOR ROUNDUP

Other than the always-expected "Can I get a job at *GameFan*?" the second most-asked question which GF ed's hear is "So what exactly do you do at *GameFan*?" Although it should be obvious to the world that we sit around for seven hours making fun of each other, that still leaves one hour left in the day... so what do we do with that hour? Lunch! In case you were wondering, though, here's our "official" job descriptions, followed by what we really do...

ecm@gamefan.com



ECM

The lofty position of Editorial Director, in theory, means ECM has final say over all editorial content. In practice, however, he just stomps around, fuming over having a bunch of slacking writer monkeys. Maybe that's why he despises *Ape Escape* so much...

cerberus@gamefan.com



CERBERUS

Executive Editor—a hot shot title that translates into BMOC (Big Man on Campus), Cerberus is actually just the butt of many jokes involving compulsive shopping, falling asleep at the wheel, and drinking a wee bit too much.

elnino@gamefan.com



EL NINO

Sports Editor means El Niño is the guy who puts *Madden* and *GameDay* in either hand... then says, "Buy *NFL 2000*." As 3rd Party Liaison, he has the 'unenviable' task of attending expense-paid industry events and getting drunk... which he's surprisingly good at.

eggo@gamefan.com



EGGO

For his transgressions, Eggo has been sentenced to imprisonment at his desk with the burden of copy editing "all that text!" As Associate Editor, he also gets to play those hot new games that come in... like *Racing Lagoon*, *Evil Zone*, and *Gex 3*... again!

dangohead@gamefan.com



DANGOHEAD

Our Codes/Strategy Editor gets bombarded with E-mails like "Your *Star Ocean 2* code crashed my system, you moron!" "Check out this cool nude code for *Metal Gear Solid*!" or "When is *Sonic Adventure* coming to the N64?"



THE 6th MAN

GameFan's gofer, the 6th Man is the one who brings us coffee and donuts. He's also the only person who actually trys to work, while the rest of us play games all day. But we only give him credit in this tiny box which nobody reads... Muwahahaha!!!

THE ART DEPARTMENT

reubus@gamefan.com

Under Construction

REUBUS

As Managing Art Director, Reubus gets to dole out all the work to his underlings, then sit back and laugh, playing *Quake* on a Mac all day, pausing only to crack the whip and call for cigarette breaks.

waka@gamefan.com

Under Construction

WAKA

GameFan's half-elf druid, I mean Senior Art Director, is responsible for layouts, and his Japanese background makes him the ideal sausage candidate for talking to Seaman through the microphone.

tao@gamefan.com

Under Construction

TAO

"Did you get any art for that game?!" cries Tao, the lone Associate Art Director. Other than bitching, his other duties include... hmm... did I mention bitching?

PRODUCTIVITY KILLER OF THE MONTH



New Intercom

Height: 3.20 in
Weight: 1.46 lb
Blood Type: O
Special Abilities: Hampster Dance, "Don't be gay!™"

Ever since we received our new phone system, it's been nothing but trouble for Team GameFan. Our squad of tech-junkies sat there for hours trying to set up voice-mail, only to give up in the end. Being the total phone gimps that we are, we've since hung up on important people (sorry, Bernie), transferred calls to all the wrong people (sorry, Brian), and not been there to answer urgent calls (sorry, Mom).

In fact, the only thing we have figured out about the new system is how to use the Intercom, so we can broadcast messages for the whole office to hear. Of course, you put that much power in the hands of Team GameFan, and it leads to sheer chaos... While certain people are 'trying to work,' the Intercom is blaring constantly with a cacophany of pop culture. South Park's Stan frequently gives us the famous line "Don't be gay!" Full songs are played for everyone's displeasure. But worst of all, there's... the Hampster Dance. The bane of certain staff members, the HD theme song is an upbeat, catchy, squeaky rendition of a chorus of hampsters singing a 'whistle while you work'-esque tune. To hear it, visit http://www.hampsterdance.com. In the classic words of Shelly Marsh, "<sound of drool through braces> I shink I'm gonna kill you, Shtan! <drool>"

This month in GameFan's BOX-O-FUN!

Top 10 Video Game Clichés That Must Die!

1) RPGs that begin with, "Wake up, sleepyhead! You've got a big day ahead of you." Is this the way all 'epics' start?
2) Lens Flares... even in tunnels.
3) Mine Cart sequences in your action games, platformers, and cereal... they're pouring out of every orifice!
4) Shooters that pit "your lone, fragile craft against an armada bent on the destruction of your tiny world."
5) Saving the Princess. Why is it always a Princess? Doesn't she have bodyguards so this sort of kidnapping thing doesn't happen?
6) Dango's big head—OK, this hasn't appeared in a video game yet, but we can't let a month go by without saying, "Look at that noggin! It's huuuuge!"
7) You must gather all four crystals/orbs of Fire, Water, Earth, and Air to save the world.
8) So who's dropping all these gold coins all over the place? And is 100 the going rate for an extra life? If so, I need a raise.
9) He's a one man army, laying down a swath of death and destruction unrivaled since the close of World War II, slaying every living, breathing thing in his path no matter how unstoppable... and he can't swim.
10) The King says, "Timmy, I have called you here to ask you to save the land from the hordes of evil that are overrunning the countryside. Now here's a pointy stick and five bucks... Go forth and conquer!"

CHICKEN OF THE MONTH

The Mystical Chinese Balls

989 Studios is the company to thank for this issue's Chicken of the Month—those Chinese iron balls which you roll around in the palm of your hand to relax. Funny thing is, nobody in the office knows what these balls are called, and most of the ventured guesses are unsuitable for print. Any time you describe them to somebody, that person knows exactly what you're talking about, but can't put a name to 'em.

The best part about this Super Chicken is it's our favorite kind of chicken... "senseless chicken." In other words, there's no correlation between the balls and any game in 989's 4th Quarter lineup. But chicken doesn't have to be game-related for us to like it. Companies, feel free to continue sending us anything you can think of, and we'll think of you fondly... then proceed to rip your game to shreds! (heh, just a li'l... joke...)



SAUSAGE OF THE MONTH



This month's SotM is one of our own... El Niño, who we thought had problems with *EverQuest*. Well, we never knew how far off the deep end he'd fallen... until now. In an act which would make all other sausages think, "Why didn't I think of that first?" he was recently discovered taking pictures of all the monsters he'd encountered in *EQ*. Why was he amassing this seemingly worthless catalogue of creatures? For an *EQ* photo album to record his exploits! What, was *Pokemon Snap* not enough for you? "Hey, Finknoddle, remember that Emerald Drake we fought in Butcherblok Mountains by the Goblin camps northeast from Kaladim?" (This is so bad we couldn't make it up.) We promise, no more *EverQuest* jokes after this month... maybe.



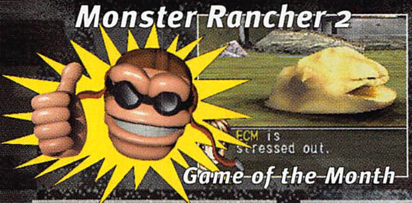
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- 6 play modes from Championship to Head-to-Head
- Over a dozen realistic tracks including motocross, supercross and enduro
- True weather effects actually influence bike and rider performance
- 9 customizable dirt bikes
- Adrenaline-pumping soundtrack





VIEWPOINT









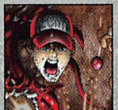




G — Graphics
C — Control
P — Play Mechanics
M — Music
O — Originality



FF Anthology
PlayStation
Square EA
Role Playing



Yes! Old school *FF* makes its triumphant return! After being subjected to two non-*FF FFs* (does that make sense?), it's nice to see Square catering to the true gamer... wait, where's *Final Fantasy II*?! What do you mean it's not on here?! Why would you do a *Final Fantasy Anthology* and **not** include the most stunning chapter in the entire series. Cecil, Kain, Palom and Porom will never get to know another generation of gamers... and that really sucks.

G 7 C 7 P 8 M 8 O 7 — **74**



Having never played *Final Fantasy II* (yes, there are people who haven't played it), I was waiting for *FF Anthology* to deliver the one RPG I was waiting for. Well, guess what? Poof, it's nowhere to be found. Granted, *Final Fantasy III* is an excellent RPG, *FFV* isn't bad, and the added CG is a nice touch. But I think it's a mistake not to include *FFII*, giving me reason not to recommend getting this game. Time to hunt for that *FF2* SNES cart...

G 7 C 8 P 8 M 9 O 6 — **77**



Sorry, I'm not sold on this Anthology idea — not after having played the Japanese version and having my favorite episode ripped right out, courtesy of Square. That's right, we get *Final Fantasy V* and *VI* (*FFIII* in the U.S.), but Square quietly removed *FFIV* (*FFII* here). What's up with that? It's not like the game wasn't already translated. Oh well, enough complaining about *FFII*. You have to be a hardcore Square fan to appreciate the *Anthology*. Too dated for my tastes.

G 4 C 8 P 6 M 6 O 6 — **72**



Gallop Racer
PlayStation
Tecmo
Horse Racing



What I like about *Gallop Racer*: it's new and different (for American audiences, at least). What I don't like about *Gallop Racer*: everything else. Now don't get me wrong, I like the little ponies as much as anyone else, however I don't have any desire to play a horse racing sim. Some of the guys around here found the game oddly addicting, but if I'm gonna play with the ponies I'm heading to the track. Stick with *Monster Rancher 2*...

G 7 C 7 P 6 M 6 O 6 — **70**



I laughed when the Tecmo rep told me you can train, race, and (you guessed it) **breed** your horses in this game. The PS needs more niche titles instead of the constant rehashes which we're being spoon-fed. I know these types of games sell well in Japan, but the learning curve is intimidating. Horse racing just isn't for me, however. If I want to spend days of my life immersed in a Tecmo game, I'll do it with *Monster Rancher 2*.

G 8 C 7 P 7 M 7 O 10 — **72**



One of the most uncommon genres in sports has to be horse racing. With that said, almost any game of this type is worth a look simply because of the sheer lack of games. *Gallop Racer* is not only a good game, but it's a really cool horse racing game. The models done up for the stallions have some serious polygons and the animation is very clean. In-game control is simple, but this one is more for those who are fanatical about racing.

G 8 C 6 P 8 M 6 O 9 — **80**



LoK: Soul Reaver
PlayStation
Eidos
Adventure



What promised to be Game of the Year material so long ago has finally proven to be nothing more than a very rushed, but decent effort by the fellows up at Crystal D. While the engine is still quite strong, the parallel world gameplay is sorely lacking, simply leading to one more step in some very monotonous puzzles. The theme rocks, the CG intro and voice acting are stunning, but the game is just so-so. And how 'bout that ending...

G 8 C 7 P 7 M 7 O 8 — **77**



Legacy of Kain: Blood Omen was one of the best early PlayStation games. I loved it, but *SoulReaver* isn't the same. The sound, voices, theme, environments, and engine are all stellar. But what about the gameplay? The shift to 3D leads to more *Tomb Raider*-like sleepiness (door-finding and box-pushing). Gone are the glory days of action in my adventure. And what's with the ending worse than *Rayman* after rescuing all 100 electoons?

G 9 C 8 P 5 M 9 O 8 — **76**



After waiting nearly two years for *LoK:SR*, the question must be asked... was it worth the wait? While the overall visuals are a bit dated, the level designs are great, the puzzles are quite challenging, and the gameplay isn't bad. So, if you're looking for a good 3D adventure game, *Soul Reaver* should do it for you. However if you're like me, who was looking forward to a monumental sequel to *Blood Omen*, then you'll probably be disappointed.

G 7 C 8 P 7 M 8 O 8 — **80**



Monster Rancher 2
PlayStation
Tecmo
Monster Breeding



Oh my god, yes! I've waited and waited and waited for this game and now my life is truly complete (for the next six weeks, at least). This is simply one of the best PlayStation games ever, and for it to get overlooked by both you and Tecmo again would be an immense tragedy. Those of you that played the first know what I'm talking about. The rest of you need to run to your nearest retailer and buy this game NOW! I'll see you at ringside...

G 7 C 8 P 10 M 7 O 9 — **98**



While not a monster ranching fiend like the two guys on either side of me, I think *MR2* is undeniably fun. Improved graphics, added gameplay features, new training techniques, and more monsters... The biggest selling point is the use of your CD's to make monsters. I could literally spend all day making monsters with my CD's (Reubus would need a month with his monstrous CD collection). One of the few must-buys on the PS.

G 8 C 9 P 9 M 7 O 7 — **92**



Thank the lord that this game is coming out this year. With so much garbage being released on the PlayStation this year, it's good to see a high quality niche title that hasn't homogenized its style to try and appeal to the wider audience. *Monster Rancher 2* may be a sequel, but it has more imagination, style, and gameplay than any "original" title this year. This may be my Game Of the Year. Buy this game!

G 7 C 9 P 10 M 8 O 9 — **96**



Pac-Man World
PlayStation
Namco
3D Platformer



Yes, it's for kids — but so what! I had a ball playing this game in its final form, even with a mess of collision problems, questionable graphics, and Pac's busted victory dance (looks like he's having a mild seizure). Why did I like it? Perhaps I'm partially starved for anything even remotely resembling a classic platformer. Oddly enough the game has an odd addiction factor, and I couldn't stop once I picked it up. Now, about a DC rev.

G 6 C 7 P 8 M 9 O 7 — **91**



I like the polygonal look of the mazes in this game, closely resembling the original *Pak-Man*, but the control's busted because you can't wiggle to stay in place. As for the platforming Quest mode, it's entertaining, and Pak's very cute and happy. But there's nothing here you haven't seen a thousand times before in *Sonic* or *Mario* or any other platformer. The best part of this game is the two-frames-of-animation happy dance. <sigh>

G 7 C 6 P 8 M 7 O 4 — **80**



In development for quite some time, Pac-Man comes to life in 3D. Great humor, style, and classic platforming gameplay will appeal to a younger crowd, but the game won't impress seasoned video game players. The platforming elements are a bit too simple (reminds me of a certain hedgehog) for my taste, and the 3D Pac-Man mazes have control problems. But overall, not a particularly bad title. A simple, yet solid game from Namco.

G 8 C 7 P 7 M 8 O 7 — **82**



I'm totally in love with this game. I've been waiting for it long enough — unfortunately, it's been thrown around like a red-headed step child for some reason. Closer to the original concept thought up by Perry and company, *R/C Stunt Copter* (AKA *Fly by Wire*) is one tough game to master. Using both analog thumb sticks to control and navigate really hones your ninja skills. *R/C* is one of my 'must-haves,' and it should be yours, too.

G 8 C 9 P 9 M 9 O 9 **90**



RC Stunt Copter is one of those games which you have to commit a lot of time to in order to enjoy the game... and even more time to master the subtle techniques of R/C Copter flying. It's got solid graphics and good controls (love that dual analog!), but there are camera issues which frustrate me. But if you can get past the learning curve and camera angles, you'll no doubt enjoy the authenticity of R/C Copter flying, and the humor.

G 7 C 9 P 8 M 9 O 9 **87**



This is Shiny's third best game (behind Sega CD *EWJ* and *MDK*). It's also their best game in ages (even though I did enjoy the ultra-short *Wild 9*). While others will go on and on about *Ape Escape's* 'revolutionary' analog gameplay, it's really all about *RC Stunt Copter* in this dept. Remarkable control, solid graphics, and a truly challenging experience all add up to an amazing game. Now you can go out and buy a Dual Shock pad.

G 7 C 10 P 8 M 8 O 10 **92**



RC Stunt Copter
PlayStation
Titus
Flight Sim



Bah, I didn't like *Suikoden* so why would I like the sequel? It's kinda odd, too. I love RPGs, but there's something about *Suikoden II* that doesn't jive right. Even if I ignore the fact that these graphics are circa 1987, I can't overlook how dull the characters and storyline are. The battle sequences aren't exciting either. In all fairness, I didn't not like the first game so I'm biased. Fans of *Suikoden* will be pleased with the sequel...

G 6 C 7 P 6 M 7 O 5 **60**



I loved *Suikoden* when it came out on the PS. So how do you outdo a game with 108 possible playable characters, excellent music, cool 2D artwork, and a good story? Well, you don't do it with *Suikoden II*. Even though it has the 108 playable characters, the music isn't as good, the visuals are only slightly better, and the story is just so-so. If you're looking for more of the same, then it's for you. Not what I was expecting in a sequel.

G 8 C 8 P 6 M 7 O 7 **82**



I'm with Cerberus on this one — *Suikoden* never was much of an RPG (it lacked soul). Sadly, *Suikoden 2* does little to rectify the first's shortcomings, with another 108 characters you'll never get to know. As we all know, RPGs are about story and character development and this is where *S2* falls flat on its face. Decent graphics (yay, it's still 2D!) and OK music don't save this one. I hate to say it, but if you liked the first you'll love this one, <sigh>.

G 7 C 7 P 7 M 7 O 5 **70**



Suikoden II
PlayStation
Konami
Role Playing



It's like the month of super-late games, or something like that. Here's another for the list. *Tiny Tank* started at MGM and made its way to SCEA more than a year later. Like *R/C Stunt Copter*, I've been waiting a while for *TT*. Not as control-heavy or difficult as I'm used to, *TT* remains fun. There are a couple of things I would change if it were up to me, but maybe we'll get a really fantastic sequel that'll star Speed Buggy's cousin again.

G 7 C 7 P 8 M 7 O 9 **78**



Hey, I think I played this game before. Wait a minute, I did play this game before! *TT* comes blessed with great humor and a solid engine. There's some slowdown when raining down the firepower, and there are a few camera issues in vs. mode. The graphics are kinda old, but at least they fixed the two player mode, which was one of my biggest gripes with this game. PS owners looking for non-stop action, this is your bag.

G 7 C 9 P 8 M 8 O 8 **86**



OK, Tiny's funny, as is the radio station broadcast; the weapon power-up system is innovative; and the graphics have been cleaned up considerably; but the gameplay is only so-so. It's not something I'd play for more than half an hour, so I can't recommend a purchase. The two-player mode runs smoothly, but it's hard to see, with hills and elevation obscuring your vision. Rent if you're into games with personality or tanks or both.

G 7 C 8 P 6 M 8 O 9 **77**



Tiny Tank
PlayStation
SCEA
Action



I'm a sucker for snowboarding games... sorry. Of course, *Trick'n Board* is not the best snowboarding game on the PlayStation, but none of the franchises I like have had anything new lately. I take what I can get, and Capcom generally keeps its lineup of titles clean. What *Trick'n Board* boils down to is if you're willing to pull out the cash for yet another snowboard title. It's not bad, but if you don't already own *Cool Boarder 2* or *3*, skip it.

G 7 C 7 P 6 M 5 O 5 **79**



I'm not a big fan of snowboarding games and I don't know anyone who is... but there's gotta be people out there buying these games or we wouldn't see one every month, right? Here's Capcom's take on a flooded market, and despite having hidden characters from *Resident Evil*, *Trick'n* isn't worth your time. The two-player mode runs as slow as El Niño after an all-you-can-eat buffet, and it's just about as pretty.

G 6 C 6 P 5 M 6 O 6 **62**



On occasion, we'll berate a company for never taking chances with something new; complaining that they're nothing more than sequel-factories. However, sometimes I should just keep my mouth shut...enter Capcom's snowboarding efforts. Let's just say I'd rather have a thousand re-hashed SF clones and a million RE clones before I ever see another snowboarding game from the house that Ryu built.

G 5 C 6 P 5 M 4 O 5 **60**



Trick'n Board
PlayStation
Capcom
Snowboarding



RC ProAm for the NES and Genesis was such an addictive game. In fact, I still have those games in my library at home. Years later, Acclaim gives us *Re-volt*: bad name, good game. I've been spoiled by playing the PC version of the game, but the game remains the same. Single player is a lot of fun, but you're going to get a kick of out of the two-player mode. Car physics are really nice and the worlds are well designed.

G 7 C 9 P 8 M 7 O 8 **80**



I've never seen the fascination with R/C cars, and I continue to be left in the dark. *Re-Volt*, with its twitchy, easy-to-flip-over control, and iffy graphics does little to show off the power of a 64-bit system. I can't believe a game like this would come out so late in the N64's career. The tracks and 'feel' of the game reflect personality, but the racing isn't fun. Cerberus looks like he's 'flipping' over this title, but I'm just left... re-volted.

G 5 C 6 P 6 M 6 O 8 **60**



I LOVE *R/C ProAm*. That said, I don't like *Re-Volt*. While they managed to almost do away with the really annoying control in the earlier revs of the game, it still feels awfully slippery. Sure, it looks decent but that's not gonna cut it when the game can't match up to the over-a-decade-old *Pro Am*. Add in the fact that a racing game is a racing game, and I'm left feeling a little re-volted (yeah, I borrowed that from Eggo so he wouldn't look lame alone).

G 7 C 4 P 4 M 5 O 9 **66**



Re-Volt
Nintendo 64
Acclaim
Racing



I dig Acclaim's premise for *Shadowman*, but I don't think I'm sold on the game. The story is a plust — straight out of the comic series, chock full of four letter words and vile serial killers. The opening cinematic with Jack the Ripper and Moonlight Sonata No.1 is an eye opener. But for me, the game doesn't have the pace I like in my daily recommended allowance. If you do play *Shadowman*, get your Surround setup, it's crazy.

G 8 C 7 P 7 M 9 O 10 **75**



Promises of a dark adventure set in a voodoo-like world bring another game to mind.... *Akuji*. While this game isn't as bad as *Akuji*, it does have shaky camera angles, a jerky frame-rate, and so-so controls. The only thing that keeps it together somewhat is the rather interesting story. But, a solid story and above average voice acting don't make up for the rest of the flaws. Still, not as bad as *Akuji the Far...* er, *Heartless*.

G 7 C 7 P 6 M 8 O 8 **77**



Shadowman? Yeah, that's an accurate description for this game, but like other champs in the brown graphics dept. (*Quake* and *Wild Arms*), this game leaves a lot to be desired in terms of both graphics and gameplay. Sorry, but the monotonous gameplay coupled with the questionable control kills this one for me. Still, the story rocks and the whole atmosphere is real nice. Too bad we don't play games for the ambiance, eh?

G 7 C 7 P 6 M 6 O 8 **70**



Shadowman
Nintendo 64
Acclaim
Action



Blue Stinger
Dreamcast
Activision
Action



One of the first Dreamcast games that was hyped for its awesome graphics was *Blue Stinger*. And in that department, *Blue Stinger* is a nice looking game... that lacks solid gameplay. Gameplay gets tedious and cameras, while improved from the import version, can still cause problems. And I hate to say it, but every time I play this game I think '*RE* clone.' Not a bad title, but I hope Sega isn't ditching gameplay for graphics.

G 9 C 7 P 6 M 6 O 7 **75**



I had high hopes for *Blue Stinger*, originally hearing that it should be more anticipated than *Sonic Adventure*. Boy was that wrong... Thinking like that, it's no wonder that I find *BS* disappointing. The camera has issues, the graphics are only par for the course (for a DC game), the gameplay is uninspired, and the music sounds good but is way over the top (it sounds like the climactic crescendo in *Terminator 2* almost all the time).

G 7 C 7 P 7 M 8 O 7 **76**



So, tell me again, Dreamcast games are supposed to make me really want to buy a DC, right? *Blue Stinger* should have been re-named *Blue Stinker* for its U.S. release. Gameplay is sub-par and acting is beyond help. The whole 'survival horror' genre rocks if done correctly, but if you want to know how *not* to do a game, this is the one to watch. There's over two dozen Dreamcast games available at launch, find a better one than this.

G 7 C 7 P 6 M 5 O 7 **60**



House of the Dead 2
Dreamcast
Sega
Gun Game



As with the import rev, I'm not completely sold on *House 2*. Sure, it's utterly beautiful, but the game just doesn't do it for me like the first chapter did. I think it has something to do with the pacing of this installment, but either way it's a solid game — just not a 'must-have.' And as for no gun included, I'm deducting a few points — have a spine, Sega. If all those windbag senators haven't done us in yet, they aren't ever going to get around to it.

G 9 C 8 P 7 M 5 O 6 **79**



House of the Dead 2 is a little too hard for my taste, but it's still a great-looking game and an excellent DC port. This is one of those "showcase games" for when a friend comes over to check out your new DC. The only problem is the lack of an official Sega light gun. I guess we'll have to settle for a 3rd party peripheral, because Sega obviously doesn't want kids to get the wrong idea and run around shooting each other. <sigh>

G 9 C 8 P 8 M 7 O 7 **89**



Perfect, *The House of the Dead 2* for the Dreamcast is an arcade perfect conversion. Every single enemy, power-up, hostage, and texture is in the same place you remember. Even better is that Sega's conversion team removed the slowdown that plagued the arcade piece. You can play the game to death without having to lose your shirt. Pick up a handy dandy 3rd party gun peripheral and you're good to go. Happy Shooting.

G 9 C 9 P 7 M 5 O 6 **85**



Hydro Thunder
Dreamcast
Midway
Racing



Wow. Having not ever played the arcade game up until the other day (for comparison purposes), it's quite clear that the DC can handle anything you throw at it... and then do it one better. A more consistent frame-rate, better effects (lens flare, for instance), and a higher res all add up to yet another beyond arcade perfect port to DC. Ignore Eggo. After all, who's going to complain about an over-produced port of an arcade game? I'm buyin' it.

G 8 C 8 P 8 M 7 O 9 **90**



Well, it looks good, there's no doubt about that, but *Hydro Thunder* just isn't for me. If I want to play a fast racing game with insane vehicle accidents, I'd rather play *F-Zero X* on the N64. *Hydro Thunder's* graphics are incredible, especially combined with the sweet frame-rate. But, they're almost too good. While showcasing the DC's ability to do reflections and lighting, it almost feels like it's too much, like the PS2 driving tech demo.

G 9 C 8 P 7 M 8 O 8 **81**



When *Hydro Thunder* first hit arcades, I thought of it as just another racing game. Now, on the Dreamcast, it's unbelievable how good this game looks. A silky smooth frame rate in both one and two player modes, good special effects, and no slowdown whatsoever... the game plays identical to the arcade but looks so much better! I just wish it had Internet capabilities so I could prove my driving mastery to the world. This game is a blast.

G 9 C 8 P 8 M 8 O 7 **88**



Mortal Kombat Gold
Dreamcast
Midway
Fighting



I was a fan of *Mortal Kombat* and *Mortal Kombat 2*... and that's it. Why? Cuz the rest of the *MK's* pretty much sucked. Now, I guess there are enough hard-core *MK* fans to warrant *MK Gold* coming on the DC. It looks alright, the animation is smooth, and the special effects look good. But the gameplay is lacking, the controls are iffy, and AI still uses that cheap-ass "jump-kick-you-out-of-everything"tactic. Most of all, I'm tired of *Mortal Kombat*.

G 8 C 6 P 6 M 5 O 5 **70**



Ahh, *MK*... I cared back in the days of *MK2*, but ever since then, interest has been declining with every outing. Now, I find it hard to even reach for the keys to type this viewpoint. I'm glad to see some of my favorite characters return (Kitana and Cyrax, the BMX Ninja), but it's still just another tired *MK* game. Besides, the other DC fighters crush it ("Excellent!"): *Soul Calibur, Street Fighter Alpha 3, Virtua Fighter 3tb, Power Stone*, etc.

G 8 C 6 P 6 M 7 O 4 **73**



I like *Mortal Kombat* a lot more now than I did a year ago. I'm a fan of the gore or fatalies. Gimmicks should never replace gameplay. When Boon and Tobias went the way of *Tekken* with *MK4*, though, I jumped on the bandwagon. Control and game balance are better than ever. The Dreamcast version is the one to get if you're an *MK* freak. It's got all the arcade goodies plus some old favorites. What are you waiting for?

G 9 C 9 P 8 M 7 O 4 **90**



Ready 2 Rumble
Dreamcast
Midway
Boxing



OK, I'm officially scared. Midway, a company that's never been synonymous with 'hard-core' has multiple 'must-have' titles at DC launch (*Hydro Thunder, Blitz*, and now *R2R*). This is the best boxing game since *Legends of the Ring* on SNES and utterly trounces both *Knockout Kings* (that's a shock... right) and *Contender* (double shock). Now it's time for you to start diggin' around in your couch for some extra change... this is getting expensive.

G 9 C 8 P 8 M 6 O 8 **90**



Ready 2 Rumble is good at what it does — provide a fun boxing experience for DC owners. Unfortunately, it's not really deep, and I wonder if you'll be playing it for very long. It's the perfect rental. It's another brick in a wall of solid Dreamcast launch titles. *R2R* is a good start for Midway, especially for a first-generation title. Definitely KO's the current competition, but I still have more fun with *Super Punch-Out* on the SNES.

G 9 C 8 P 7 M 8 O 8 **83**



Ah, Yeah! Midway is the publisher of choice if you want the goods for Dreamcast. *Ready 2 Rumble* will turn some heads and change the way we look at boxing games in one fell swoop. It's how boxing should be — if you want the masses to play. Special moves, secret characters, stunning animations. *Ready 2 Rumble* is a party game waiting to happy. Trust me, whether you like or dislike fighting or boxing... PLAY THIS GAME!

G 9 C 9 P 9 M 7 O 7 **93**



Soul Calibur
Dreamcast
Namco
Fighting



Whoa! As with Eggo, I'm sold now that I've spent a number of late nights with this absolutely blazing game. Incredible visuals (minus the clothing animations), stunning, ultra-deep gameplay, and enough extra stuff to keep you playing for a week on end (that's saying a lot for the one-player aspect of a fighting game). Now that I'm through this one, where's a new version of Klonoa or a revved up Pac Man World, Namco?

G 11 C 9 P 9 M 10 O 6 **98**



I'm a changed man. I'll admit I didn't give *SC* a chance in the arcade, but neither did most people. With the new competition of DC owners, though, this game's been given a second chance, and I like what I see. It plays a lot like *Virtua Fighter*, with the 8-way run sidesteps, pressuring people as they get up, and combos you invent (as opposed to dial-in). This is the game that convinced me to buy a Dreamcast; you should too.

G 10 C 9 P 9 M 9 O 7 **96**



Am I the only sane person on the staff?!? Why does everyone feel that *Soul Calibur* is an A+ title ever since it appeared on the Dreamcast? No one cared when *Soul Calibur* was a rarely played arcade game. And that was for good reason. Gameplay in *Soul Calibur* hasn't changed much since *Soul Edge* — and *Soul Edge* was what you'd call a 'button masher'-fest. C'mon people, wake up! I love Namco and all, but buy *Power Stone* instead...

G 10 C 8 P 5 M 7 O 2 **69**









Having been available a little over a year in Japan, the Dreamcast, much like the Saturn, has established itself as an arcade machine... pure and simple, the DC might as well be a glorified Super Gun (a JAMMA arcade kit for the home). *VF3tb*, *Sega Rally 2*, *Dynamite Cop 2*, *Marvel Vs. Capcom*, *Street Fighter Alpha 3*, *Crazy Taxi*, *Power Stone*, *Soul Calibur*, *HOTD2*, and yes, *Zombie Revenge* have all marked their debut in arcades around the country. And with ports in the works for all the aforementioned games, few can deny the genius behind Sega's arcade-to-home strategy. Save those quarters folks, 'cause conventional arcades are about to become a thing of the past.

When the original *House of the Dead* appeared at my local arcade, I was completely overcome by the game's gothic look and ultra-violent gameplay. Although I had never been a huge fan of arcade gun games (generally they cost an arm and a leg to play), I decided in this case to invest a li'l green in Sega's newest undead eradicator. Months later, we would see *HOTD* make an extremely poor appearance on the Saturn, leaving our Dangohead a mere crumb of the glorious pastry he once was.

Now *HOTD2* is a prime example of how to properly port an arcade game. In all respects, the DC version is perfect—down to the insane level of detail on the zombies' faces and the blazingly smooth animation of the huge bosses.

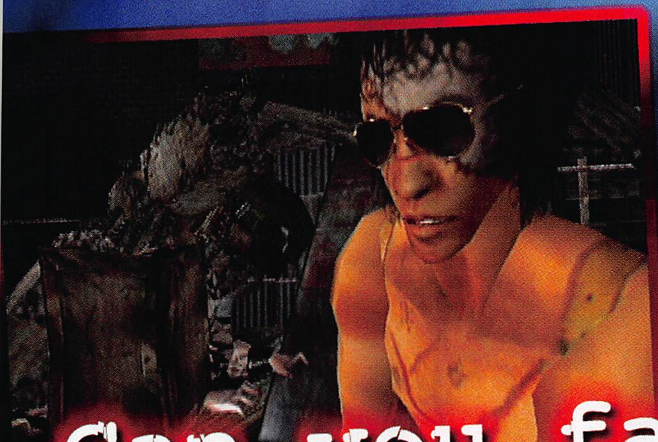


The true horror









Though the rumors that the original *HOTD* could be unlocked in *HOTD2* were false, I was content with an utterly perfect port of my favorite arcade game... till now.

In the vein of *Streets of Rage* and *Final Fight* (though *ZR* is fully 3D), SEGA's once dark gun game has now grown legs, hopped off the *HOTD* rail system, and joined the ranks of the best side-scrolling beat-'em-ups around—*Zombie Revenge*, the *HOTD* side story, is almost here.

Can you face the fear?



Easily my most anticipated DC release yet, *Zombie Revenge* at this early stage (our demo was only of the first level) is looking to easily join the ranks of port perfection. Of course, it doesn't hurt that it was developed on Naomi hardware (nothing better than knowing that if you see an arcade game with the Naomi logo on it, a home DC translation is a no-brainer).

Graphically, *ZR* follows suit with the same macabre feel that its *HOTD* predecessors used so well. The enemies animate with the greatest of ease and fill the screen without an ounce of slowdown. Like in *HOTD2*, all the textures in *ZR* look extremely clean, and hopefully the final version will be compatible with the DC VGA box. Witnessing games of this caliber (*Shotoku Battle* and *Soul Calibur* are also excellent examples) appearing in their finest visual glory is definitely worth the price of admission (note: with a $60 price tag, the VGA box is an extremely expensive, but must-have, DC peripheral).

Like *HOTD2*, *ZR* is one of the few games that's nearly as much fun to watch as it is to play, and having waited in line for over an hour at E3 to give it a go, I can certainly testify to this. Each of the three playable characters (Stick Breitling, Linda Rotta, Rikiya Busujima) has a multitude of throws and unique attacks.

REVENGE™

lies within....













The evil will walk again....







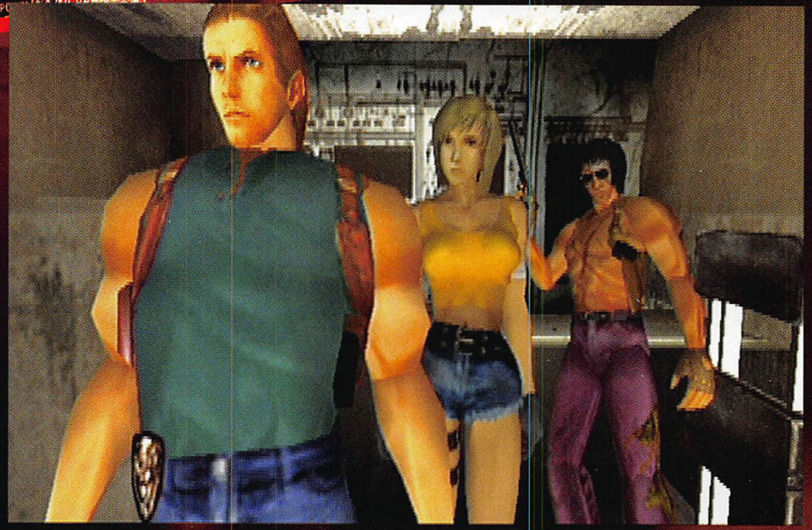


Like *Dynamite Cop*, once you grab an enemy, you can then alter your attack by performing various button combinations. Rikiya for instance can use his voodoo magic to infest zombie bodies and cause them to explode in a hail of singed undead parts—damn, I got some intestines on my new pants!

Zombie Revenge has a fairly complex battle system for a beat-'em-up, but the plot is as straight to the point as they come. Instead of using the undead for government/military purposes, an evil outside force (besides Goldman, the main antagonist in *HOTD2* who's now M.I.A. in *ZR*) has other plans in mind—world domination! Also absent in *ZR* is the main team of special agents (James, Gary and Amy) who restored the peace in *HOTD2*.

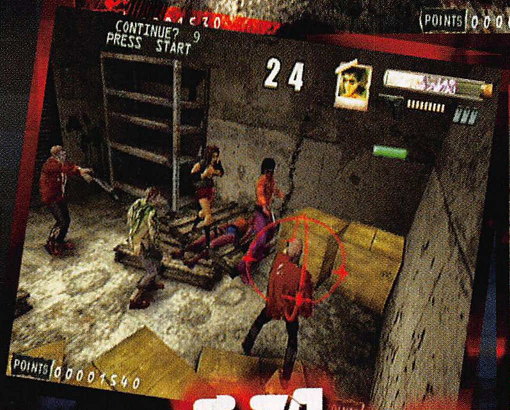
While their whereabouts are unknown, the new group of heroes in *ZR* fit perfectly into this morbid mix. Stick Breitling is the main character in the game and looks very much like the All-American type—blonde hair and blue eyes. Linda Rotta is the busty, femme fatale of the group and is definitely able to give Buffy the Vampire Slayer a run for her money. Lastly, Rikia Busujima appears to have been yanked right out of an episode of *Good Times* (voodoo magic and afros are a strange combination).

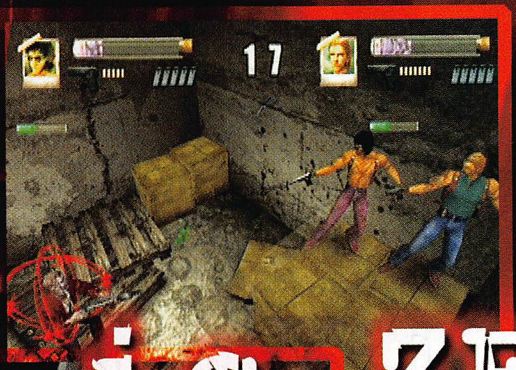
Besides the wealth of combos and throws, characters in *Zombie Revenge* can pick up a number of awesome weapons. This game has a serious arsenal of available artillery—automatic machine guns, flame-throwers, grenades, land mines, shotguns, pistols, drills and many other implements of torture. Riddle the undead with enough lead and their carcasses will explode, sending body parts splattering against the walls.











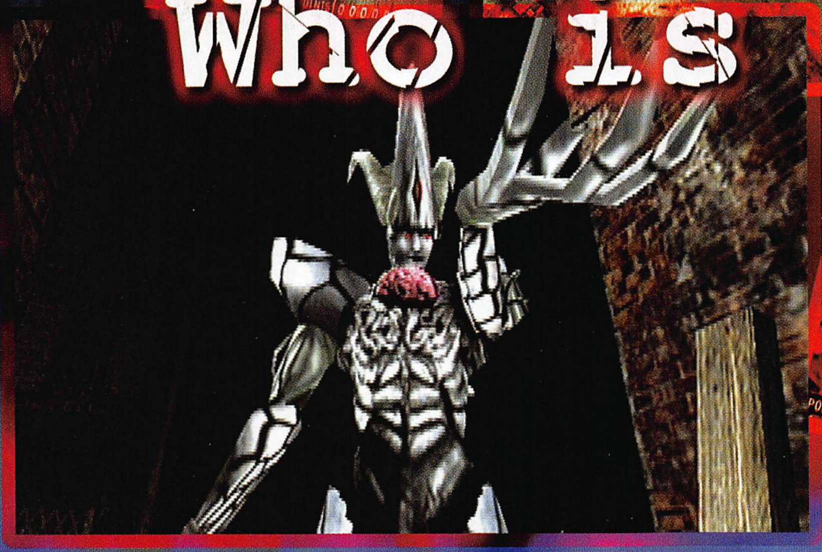
While not as difficult as *HOTD2* (I have yet to get my trigger finger to stop twitching), *ZR* is still an extremely difficult game. Like your typical beat-'em-ups, the action in *ZR* is directed with a set of highlighted arrows. The catch is that each battle sequence has a particular time limit that players must abide by. With such a large number of villains to deal with at once, the time limit becomes quite a challenge. Another interesting feature is the zombies' ability to reverse your throws. All might seem well at first... and then before you know it, you're on the receiving end of some undead punishment. It just goes to show that in the *HOTD* universe, things are not always as they seem—did that festering ball of maggots just pull a reversal?!

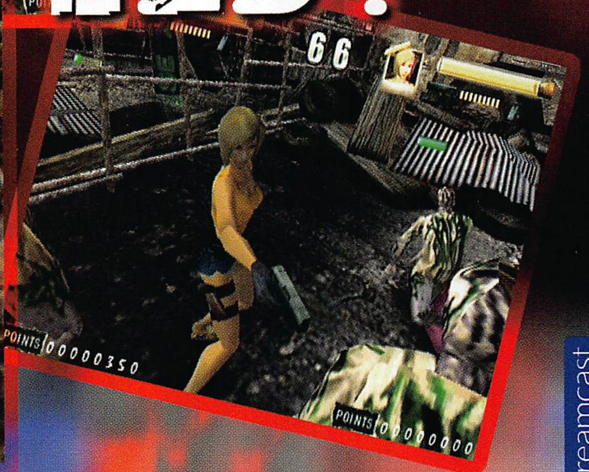
Unlike *Blue Stinger*, *Carrier*, or *Resident Evil: Code Veronica*, *Zombie Revenge* is not a survival horror game. It's just a beat-'em-up... plain and simple. This is not a game filled with puzzles and exploration. For some, that might be a nice addition for future *HOTD* titles, but definitely not *ZR*. Much of the game's appeal is the non-stop action, and believe me, I mean **non-stop**!

Although most gamers found the voices in the *HOTD* series to be... well, annoying, I found them extremely comical ("my friends went inside... I told them not to go"). Thankfully, for the few hard-core *HOTD* fans out there (Cerberus still hasn't found me that *HOTD2* nightlight), the voices in *ZR* are equally as... umm, enjoyable?

The only reason the Saturn survived as long as it did was because of its arcade ports. The Dreamcast, however, has both an excellent variety of killer arcade ports and original titles. Say what you will about Sega and the future of the DC, but they are definitely the undisputed kings of in-house quality products. *Zombie Revenge* is a perfect example of this internal genius. If you are a fan of awesome, ultra-violent games and the *HOTD* world, good things are indeed coming this October when *Zombie Revenge* is released in Japan. We'll be back with a full review ASAP, and until then, remember... the only good zombie is a splattered zombie! **F**

Who is ZED?



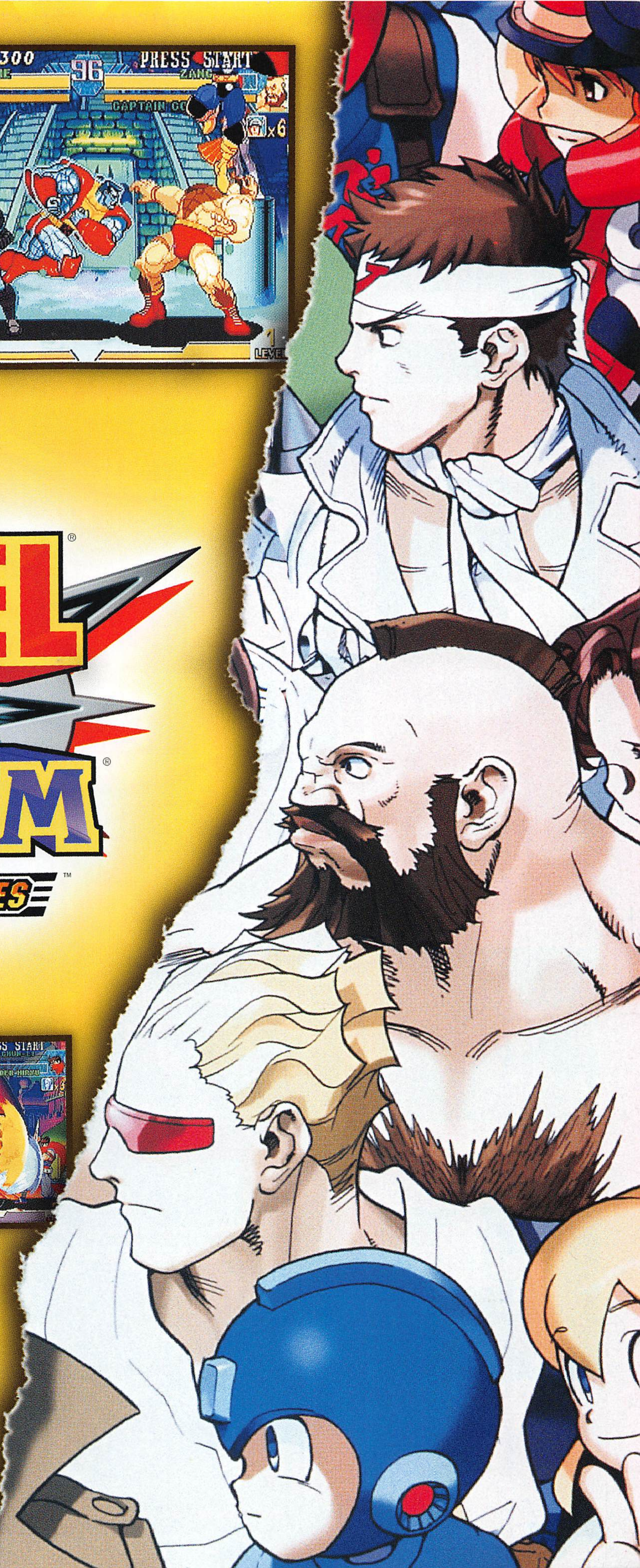




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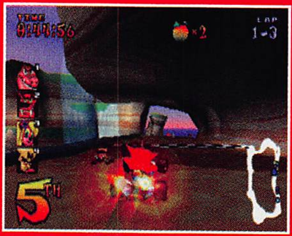
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Reviews

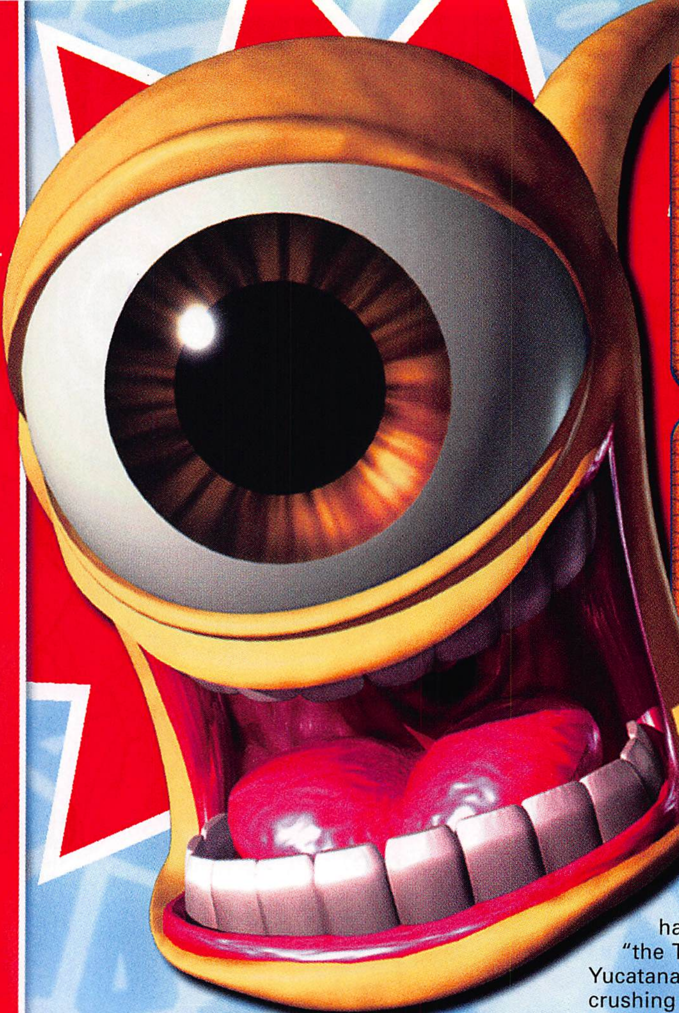


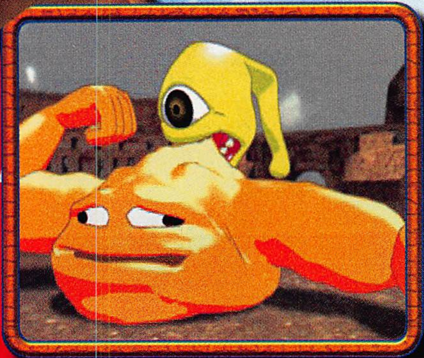


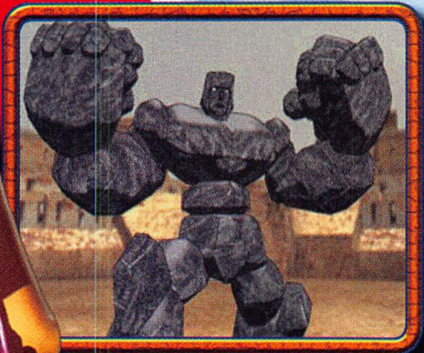
Previews











Mons Ranc

With a final yelp, ECM fell to the ground in a broken heap. My eyes panning upwards from his still-twitching form, I summed up the monster who had put him down: the mighty El Niño—"the Two-Ton Terror, the Bane of Burritos, the Yucatana Slamma." I'd come so far, already crushing the likes of Dangohead and Cerberus... I would not be denied, not even by this hulking brute. As he rushed in, trying to finish me with the mighty Chupacabra Clutch, I slipped the brass knuckles on, socked him in the kisser, and cracked him over the head with a steel chair, till I finally stood victorious. At last! After a grueling steel cage match, the single copy of *Monster Rancher 2* was mine!







In an office which sees every game imaginable, it's not often that a title comes by which is so incredible that it grabs the hearts and minds of everyone here and keeps us captivated for days... weeks... even months on end. So when a title of this caliber arrives, it's important that everyone recognize its worth. Why? Because *Monster Rancher 2* is more firmly cemented in gameplay and fun



than any other game out there. It's still early (not even 4th Qtr yet), but judging from what I saw at E3, this is my odds-on favorite for Game of the Year on a domestic console.



For those Neanderthals who missed the original *Monster Rancher* in early '98, here's a little history lesson. It came out of the blue, shocking gamers everywhere with its simple graphics, awesome gameplay, incredible replay value, and completely original game design. Spreading like wildfire, *Monster Rancher* became an instant cult-classic, spawning a new genre of video games (the "ranching/breeding" game), and snaring countless gamers in its addictive web. Once you caught *Monster Rancher* fever, you were hooked—Tamagotchi had nothing on this.

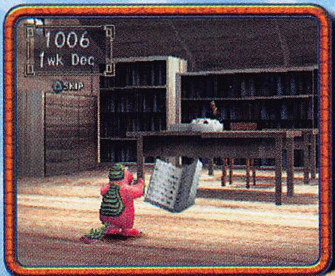


The only downside to the original (other than the obvious addiction and disregard for personal hygiene in lieu of ranching) was that stores couldn't keep the game stocked on their shelves. Every time a couple copies came in, they'd sell out, and customers were turned away empty-handed. Nobody was ready for *Monster Rancher* fever to catch on like it did.



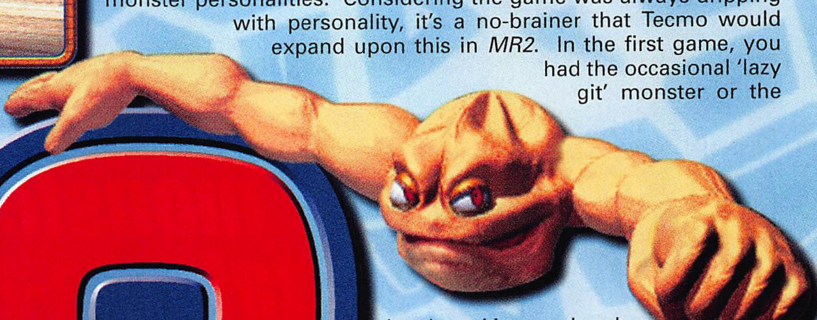






Now, a year and a half later, Tecmo is more prepared, and Phase Two of the *Monster Rancher* invasion is set to launch. The game should be out by the time you read this, and it does everything a sequel should: address every grievance of the original, while throwing in enough features to warrant another purchase. Granted, the visuals and combat are virtually identical to the first, but *Monster Rancher* has always been about gameplay over graphics.

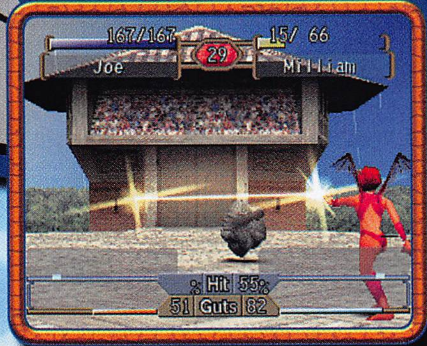
One of the most important new features is the development of monster personalities. Considering the game was always dripping with personality, it's a no-brainer that Tecmo would expand upon this in *MR2*. In the first game, you had the occasional 'lazy git' monster or the



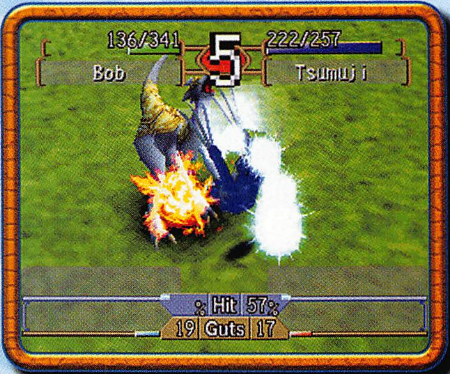


hard-working, loyal dog-type. But now, personalities are much more defined and detailed. Every creature has likes and dislikes listed which include anything from certain foods to work to battle to you. They also have a category called "nature," which is how the monster reacts to training, battle, and domestication. If your monster is a bad seed (with the worst nature), he'll cheat in his training, which earns some points, but prevents him from maximizing his learning potential. Plus, it usually calls for strict disciplinary measures afterwards. Even worse than a cheating monster is one who's truant to training (What do you mean Entau didn't show up at school today!?! Grrr...).

Other minor changes have been added which improve gameplay and convenience. For example, fighting in tournaments will now earn a monster experience and raise its stats (so a frozen, breadwinner monster who spends every day of his short, remaining life fighting in tournaments can still gain experience). Fortunately, the repetitive battle intros of the first game have been axed entirely, which is good, because they were unnecessary.







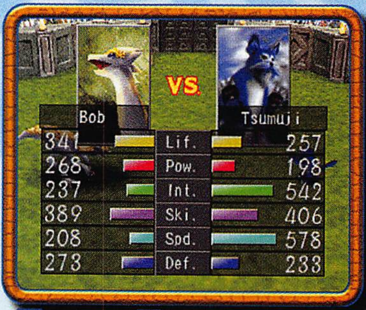








In the old *Monster Rancher*, tournaments were Round Robin affairs — everyone would fight everyone, and the person with the least losses was the winner. Now, there's two different tournament styles: Round Robin and Elimination. Elimination is a "one loss and you're out" contest with participants put in different brackets. There's much less fighting involved, but a single mistake could cost you the tournament, because your competitors are the best of your class. Free-For-Alls are another new tournament type. Unlike the rest, there are no class distinctions in a FFA tourney. Your E-class (the lowest) monster could go up against an A-class monster in the first round; and if that happens, it'll surely be hospitalized.

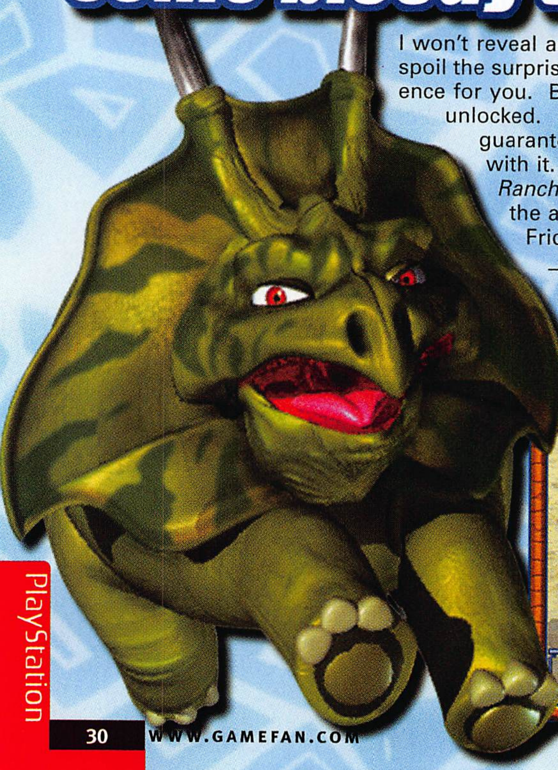


If you haven't played *Monster Rancher* before, and you're looking for something fresh to try on your PlayStation (a system with a disturbing amount of unoriginal games), definitely pick up a copy of *MR2* (or at least rent it). And if you're a gamer who loved the original, I guarantee you'll like the sequel. It's more challenging than the first; there's a greater variety of monsters (nearly double); much more personality; and gameplay tweaks which improve an already solid product.

Plus, I get the feeling that *MR2* was made exclusively for the people who played the first one. Other than the aforementioned improvements, there are many 'inside jokes' which players of the first will recognize and smile at when they see.



Let loose your monster in the arena for some bloody talon-a-talon combat!

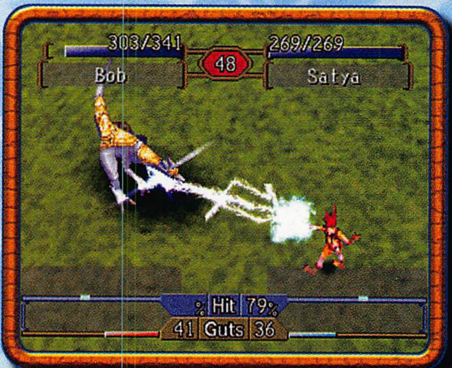


I won't reveal any of the treasures that await, because that would spoil the surprise and ruin the complete *Monster Rancher 2* experience for you. But trust me, there's some really cool secrets to be unlocked. There's so much personality in this game that I guarantee anyone who gives it a chance will fall in love with it. Buy it now! Oh, one last thing, there's a *Monster Rancher* television cartoon coming, which should be on the air by the time you read this. Check it out Monday-Friday on the BKN Network.

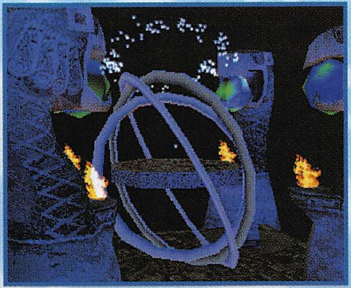


Eggo locked himself in a room with the only copy of Monster Rancher 2. *He won't come out and doesn't respond to insults of his manhood.*





New Game Features...



Sausage Surprise
Talk about a feature that's made for the peeps, Tecmo gives gamers something we've been screaming for all along: crossover data. Did you spend a lifetime-and-a-half raising exotic monsters like apes and dragons in the first *Monster Rancher*? Did you grow attached to your progeny after seeing generations of the same monster grow up over time? Well assuming you didn't erase your memory card save like I did <doh!>, you can take your monsters from the first game, and import them into *Monster Rancher 2*, retaining all their stats! Thank you, Tecmo!

Gamers who never played the original can still make monsters the old-fashioned way: by going to the shrine and reading data off of CDs in their collection (games or music CDs). And if you're a loser who doesn't own any CDs, there are always three monsters on sale at the market.





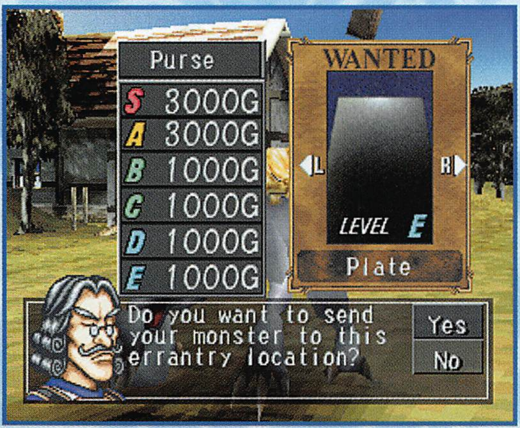




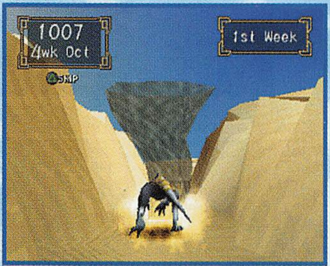


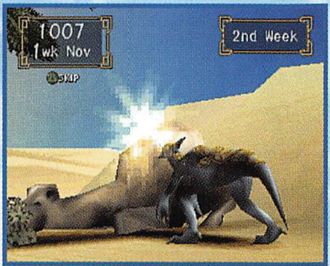


Would You Like to Play a Game?
As I mentioned countless times, *Monster Rancher 2's* got more personality than the original. Here's just one example: the monster type Mocchi. These guys have an affinity for playing... mini-games even. When raising a Mocchi, it'll ask to play with you from time to time. If you accept its offer, the two of you will go out to a field and engage in a snow/mudball fight. This mini-game plays much like a one-on-one FPS, complete with sniper scope and multi-hit combos. Mocchi are also known for giving presents to their masters, such as this mud doll, which doesn't appear to be useful at first. Who knows if some other critter down the line wants a Mocchi doll later... you never know.



Training Overhaul
Anyone who played *MR* to death knows that a large part of the game is spent training your monster to improve its stats. Thankfully, the entire training system has been given a visual makeover. "Work" has been replaced by "drill," which doesn't earn you any cash, but allows you to train a stat or two for a single week (same as before). "Training" is now called "errantry," and is much more pleasing to the eye. These month-long excursions serve the same purpose—to beef up two statistics while teaching special techniques to your monster. Whereas training used to be a two-second, hand-drawn scene, it's now a fully polygonal, dramatic, and always hilarious event. Each training ground is basically a four-part obstacle course, with a boss in the fourth section. Assuming your li'l guy completes all four sections successfully, a final 'renegade monster' will confront him at the end. Trapped in a battle to the death with the bandit monster, your fella is not controlled by you during this life-and-death struggle. If it wins, you're rewarded a bounty for capturing the fugitive. The best part about drills and errantry is that you can skip the cut-scenes if you just want the results. It's quick, it's painless, and you get to move on as soon as possible. Definitely a feature which hard-core ranchers will appreciate in the long run.









Viewpoint Score: 97	Developer - Tecmo	1-2 Players	EGGO: Beware, gamer. This
	Publisher - Tecmo	Available Now	is the console Everquest.

R Review

PlayStation


This is no time
second
2 Player Split Screen Mode
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to
guess yourself.
Killer soundtrack including music performed by
Blink 182, Ministry, Fear Factory, Face to Face, Voodoo Glow Skulls, Pulley, Lagwagon, Ten Foot Pole, H_2O, Joi
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EVERYONE
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Exclusive Create-A-Park Feature
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I'm not going to reiterate the history of *Pac-Man*. He's the grand-daddy of all we hold dear in the gaming world, and we all know it — or should know it. Loads of games and licensing madness speak of how far Pac-Mania went in the early '80s. The portly yellow dot had some games appear on the Genesis and SNES, but nothing for any of the current platforms... until now.

From the get-go, *Pac-Man World* didn't take off as planned. The original development team was allegedly fired and then the second team reportedly quit because of conflicts with management. Poor li'l Pac was getting a raw deal. At one point, Namco didn't even have a concrete name for Pac's new escapades: *Pac-Man 3D*? *Pac In Time*? I guess *Pac-Man World* is do-able. Three years later, the wait is over.

From its gouraud-shaded beginning, *Pac-Man* has come a long way. For Namco Hometek's maiden voyage in development *Pac-Man World* rocks. Both in graphics and gameplay, *Pac-Man World* reminds me a lot of Namco's *Klonoa*. Not a bad comparison considering this is the veteran staff that oversaw the creation of *Klonoa*. Gameplay in *Pac-Man World* is more three-dimensional than *Klonoa's* 2D gameplay... not 2.5D, which is a lame buzzword.

But I digress... *Pac-Man World* perfectly mimics those old 8-bit and 16-bit platforms we used to go nuts over. There's a certain puzzle element in each level, but it doesn't butt into the platforming we like so much; the puzzles remain simple, giving Pac more time to use his double bounce and Sonic-ish speed dash. Like other adventure platform games, *Pac-Man World* has learned a lot from its competitors. Each area of the game is divided into stages, with a boss at the end of each, be it a pirate ship, an evil doppleganger or — even better — a remake of *Galaga* with re-mixed music. ECM noted the stellar music done up by Tallarico Studios. Sound effects throughout are genuinely *Pac-Man* with some 32-bit improvements.

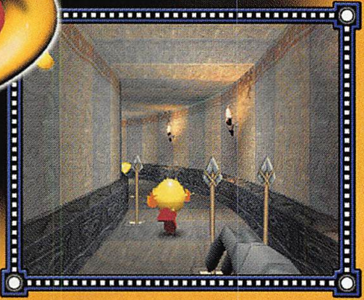
Games aren't as pure as they used to be; it's more business and less pleasure for video games these days. *Pac-Man World* kicks you in the pants and reminds you of how games should be done. So what is the solution if you don't want to play *Pac-Man World*? What if I tell you that Namco has included the original arcade classic and a maze game that looks just like *Pac-Mania*? Oh, now you wanna play? That's what I thought, now let me get back to my game.

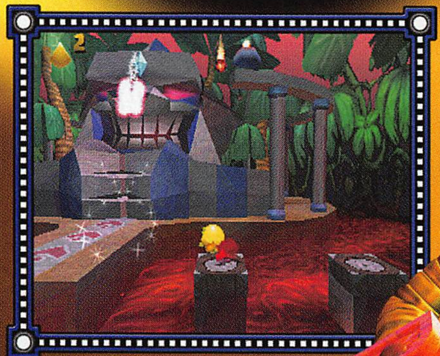
Cerberus can't seem to get the hang of Pac-Man at standard speeds and needs a speed-up code to play properly. His teachers always said he was hyperactive...





20th Anniversary Pac-Man World













R Review	Cerberus: Pac is back.	Developer - Namco / Publisher - Namco	1 Player / Available Now	Viewpoint Score: 87



THIS IS THE HEART.

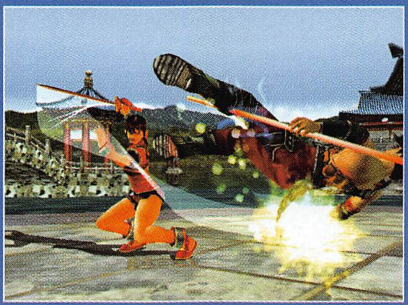

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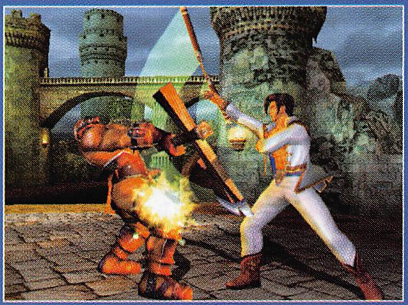


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The Legend of Zelda, Metal Gear Solid, GoldenEye: all games that have been covered to death and taken much longer to develop than planned. *Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver* joins this esteemed party. Nearly four years have passed since the original, which is a helluva long time to design a sequel. I'm not raggin' on long development cycles; in fact, I applaud them. Still, nothing is sacred in this world. *Zelda* and *Metal Gear* weren't perfect, and detractors flamed what flaws they found... no matter how minor. It's unfortunate that *Blood Omen's* successor is fated to run the same gauntlet. Only time will tell how this game fares in the long run. But I'm not letting my jaded-gamer tendencies come through on this one.

When Eidos' *Soul Reaver* propaganda machine began to churn, I went the route of "Hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil." Not only was my interest level at zero, but *Soul Reaver* didn't seem like my type of game. The constant delays strengthened my apathy for Kain even more. Ironic that all it took to make me want to play was its motion picture-quality opening cinematic. But it wasn't just the cinematic... the way the story was told in five minutes really drew me in.

According to the story, Kain had the choice of martyring himself or ruling Nosgoth and taking it into the Dark Age. *Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver* begins millennia after Kain chose evil. A thousand years have given Kain enough time to nearly eradicate the human race... making Nosgoth a living hell for humans. To ensure his reign would go unchallenged, Kain resurrected six souls to serve as his lieutenants. In the coming millennium, Kain had plans to evolve into a greater being. And after his transformation, one of his lieutenants would follow... but not before the master.

As the intro begins, Raziel, Kain's first lieutenant, enters the Pillars of Nosgoth, knowing he has committed a crime against his master. He has surpassed Kain, by growing wings before him. Raziel is stripped of his wings by Kain and sentenced to burn in the white fires of the Lake of the Dead. He awakens to find himself a different being. The water from the Lake is like fire to vampires, and Raziel's body does not survive the fall. This story is told with the finest computer graphics, sounds, and voice acting I've ever experienced in video games, though the story is later advanced by the use of real-time polygons. When an intro is as absorbing as this, you *want* to play the game.





LEGACY of KAIN™ SOUL REAVER





R REVIEW	CERBERUS: RAZIEL, YOU ARE WORTHY...	DEVELOPER - CRYSTAL DYNAMICS PUBLISHER - EIDOS	1 PLAYER AVAILABLE NOW	VIEWPOINT SCORE :90





Not a weakling, Raziel becomes a serious bad-ass through the course of his journey. In his first battle with Kain, Raziel becomes one with the Soul Reaver blade. Together, the two become practically unstoppable. The weapon itself is one of the coolest things in gamedom. Imagine a demonic lightsaber fused to Raziel's right arm. Later Raziel and his blade earn the ability to project sonic waves and even fire. How awesome is that? Raziel cannot scale walls or swim in the material realm, but by stealing his brothers' powers, he learns how to use his claws to their fullest. No one can say that Crystal Dynamics spent three years on this game without refining the control. As responsive as he is agile, Raziel makes Spidey look like a cast member in the movie *Cocoon*.

Not many games hide from you the fact that you're actually completing a puzzle. Sometimes you won't even know

Everything about Soul Reaver is unbelievable, from the story to the architecture.





you've completed one until it's finished. By the way, be ready for some seriously wicked puzzles. If you can complete all the puzzles in *Soul Reaver* without help, apply to the genius organization MENSA (which ironically means stupid in Spanish).

To paraphrase the dubiously-masculine ninja, Eggo, everything about *Soul Reaver* is unbelievable, from the story to the architecture, from the characters and animation to the game engine. The Nosgoth scenery is some of the best I've ever laid eyes on, for a PlayStation game. Dimly lit hallways go dark when Raziel takes the torch from its holder. Stained glass windows project exterior light like a church window. It's frightening how far Crystal Dynamics has pushed the PS—even with all that pesky fogging.

You didn't think I'd get through the review without some gripes, did you? Okay, the fog is a given when you push this many polygons, but what about other things? Much like *Zelda* for the N64, the areas are so far apart that I did more walking than I'd like. Sure, you can warp, but that's no fun. Enemies are too uncommon—when there's a load of moves at your disposal, you want to use them often. But believe it or not, that's the extent of my grievances.

Take this trip through Nosgoth—playing an angel of death doesn't happen often. And games this good don't come along as often as they should. As I said before, do what I did and put your jaded-gamer tendencies aside <cough, cough—ECM> and give *Soul Reaver* the time it deserves. Vae Victus!

Cerberus regularly shifts himself back and forth from the material plane to the spectral plane in hopes of avoiding deadlines.





On paper, it's a great idea. Publish *Final Fantasy VI* again, throw in a 'new' *Final Fantasy* game (*FFV*) for U.S. con sumption, fresh CG intros and endings for both games, a nifty run button (built in Sprint Shoes, woo hoo!), and wrap up the whole package with a shiny red ribbon—a third CD soundtrack of the best music from both games. With a deal like that, you'd think that we'd be all over it. After all *Final Fantasy Anthology* is better than *FFVIII*, but... As I write this review, my heart is not into it. I feel like I've los a friend... someone I grew up with and expected to see again. Unfortunately, it wasn't meant to be. *Fina Fantasy IV* (*FFII* on the SNES), which should have been a part o this package, has been condemned to spend its final years in the Land of the Rising Sun. The Japanese counterpart of *Anthology Final Fantasy Collection*, had *FFIV*, but Square of America has for saken us... again. It's another crime against humanity, rivaling the *Tobal 2* disaster of '97 and the *Grandia* massacre on Saturn <sigh> For more rants about *FFIV*, see this month's Graveyard So without further ado, on with the review...

FINAL FANTASY V

FINAL FANTAS





Final Fantasy V—aka *Final Fantasy 2.5*. While *FFII* and *III* on the SNES were arguably the best RPGs ever, they were actually only *FFIV* and *VI* on the Super Famicom. Yes, there was a *Final Fantasy* game developed between those legendary titles, and finally U.S. gamers are getting the chance to play it... over five years after the fact. That's the most disturbing thing about playing *FFV* these days: the dated graphics. If you're able to get over the fact that the game isn't very pretty (compared to modern games like *Shen Mue*, *Ogre Battle 64*, and *Final Fantasy VIII*), then you'll have a good time with it. Hard-core Square fans should be excited about playing a "new" *Final Fantasy*, especially one developed back in the day, when Square's games weren't million sellers, but they deserved to be.

FFV's story follows Butz and company, trying to protect the Crystals of the world from falling into the wrong hands. It's a pretty generic recipe for a story: mix two cups unintentional hero with one cup "save me" princess... stir vigorously, then let settle and fall in love. Now mix two teaspoons of dragons, magic, and adventure. Toss in magic crystals of fire, water, earth, and wind... and voila! You have *FFV*. The plot isn't ground-breaking, but it's still more involving than the 32-bit *Final Fantasies* we're seeing today, because *FFV* is more heavily rooted in story... and jobs.

Anyone who's played *FF Tactics* knows about the plethora of jobs available in the *Final Fantasy* universe (no unemployment here). Well, *FFV* is where all those jobs started. Thief class, black magicians, white magicians—all that came from this lost game. Also, the *Final Fantasy* intro music is given proper treatment in this game too. Thus, there's a lot of history in *V*... it's a step in the evolution of *Final Fantasy*, and Square fans should experience it.









REVIEW	EGGO: My Collection can beat up your Anthology!	Developer - Square	1 Player	Viewpoint Score: 93
		Publisher - Square EA	Available Oct.	

As for the game, it's definitely not as stellar as *FFIV* or *VI*, but it's still worth playing. It's a solid RPG with plenty of depth (jobs and secrets), story, and music (Nobuo Uematsu in his prime) to satisfy the hard-core gamer. Thankfully, it's not plagued by the same problems which mar *FFVI* (the other game in this anthology), namely loading time and slowdown.





Final Fantasy VI

Believe it or not, *FF Anthology* loses some points for *FFVI*... or rather, the butchering of it. This game (*FFIII* on the SNES) is my favorite RPG of all time, but the version we get in *FF Anthology* isn't the same game I grew up with. Like an aging sports star, the years haven't been kind to *FFVI*; this former superstar of a cart game has lost a step in the transition to the CD league. And now, I'm forced to watch my once-worshipped RPG sit on the sidelines, saddled with the injuries of old age, slowdown and loading, while newcomers like *FFVII* and *VIII* make all the big 'money' plays.

Unfortunately, *FFVI* in *Anthology* is a far from perfect port. I'm not sure why, but *FFV* (and even *IV* in Collection) doesn't suffer from the same drawbacks. Maybe it's because there's a lot less going on graphically in the older games, because *FFVI* had some eye-popping graphics back in the day. *FFVI's* biggest problem in *Anthology* is slowdown. Use Edgar's AutoCrossbow when there are more than two enemies on the screen and you'll see the game chug to a near-halt as the arrows fly through invisible molasses. Cast a magic spell over multiple targets and the same thing happens. Even Sabin's Aurabolt appears to be missing frames of animation. <sigh>

Not only is the slowdown agonizing, but there's some loading to deal with as well. It's not that bad (roughly one second), considering you should be used to loading in 32-bit battles by now, but it's a nuisance waiting for the menu to come up when using items or equipping weapons/armor.





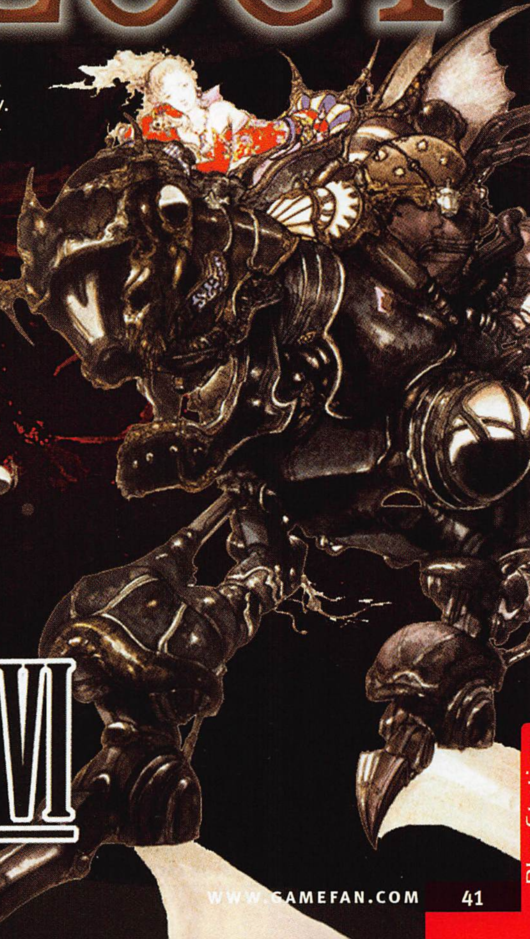




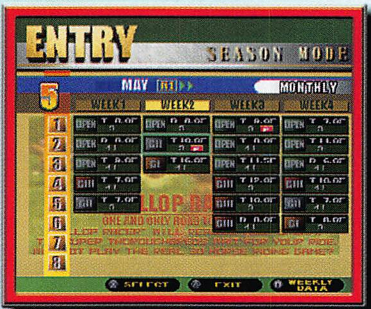
Y ANTHOLOGY

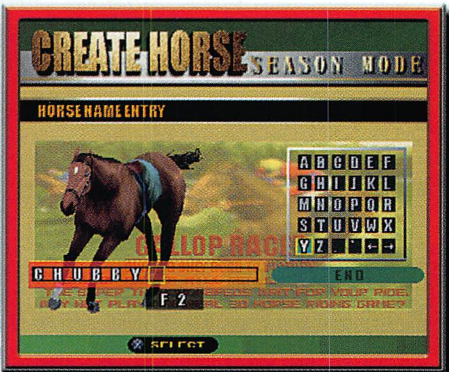
These grievances aside, this is still *Final Fantasy VI*, one of the best RPGs you'll ever play. And assuming you played it on the SNES, *Anthology* will bring back some fond memories. The music is rousing, awe-inspiring, and haunting—easily Nobuo Uematsu's finest hour (*FFIV* coming in a close second). The opera scene is the stuff of 16-bit legend. Yoshitaka Amano's characters are full of life, personality, and unique playing styles. I could go on and on about this game: Chupon in the Coliseum... the Cursed Shield and Illumina... Gogo the Mimic (Hironobu Sakaguchi's favorite *FF* character according to our interview in August)... Sabin's blitzes... Umaro... all the monsters in the Veldt... I still get chills seeing the opening credits: Producer Hironobu Sakaguchi, Image Designer Yoshitaka Amano, Music Composer Nobuo Uematsu, Graphic Director Tetsuya Nomura (later did character design for *FFVII*, *VIII*, and *Parasite Eve*). And hey, they even fixed the character's name from "Vicks" to "Biggs." For all these reasons alone, it's worth owning *FF Anthology*.

Eggo can be found among the group of protestors camped outside Square EA's Costa Mesa offices until we get a domestic release of FFIV.



FINAL FANTASY® VI





What is it with Tecmo and niche games? They sold out with *DOA* and used to bank on their cheesy *Tecmo Bowl*, but lately it has been nothing but small market titles and really good ones at that. Both *Monster Rancher* and *Deception 2* were personal favorites of mine in 1998, and judging from the number of hours I have logged on *MR2* already, it qualifies as one of my top games for 1999. I continue to wait for *Deception 3* (fingers crossed), but all I have is this.

Speaking of niche games, it doesn't get any more specialized than a horse-racing sim. *Gallop Racer* (a game which could have just as easily been in sports) resembles a horse-racing version of *Monster Rancher*. But it would be a mistake to dismiss it just based on its premise. In fact, *Gallop Racer* has that gaming *je ne sais quoi* which compels one to keep playing.

It's just a bunch of friggin' horses running around a track... and yet I am engrossed. Why? I have no idea. You start the game as a rookie trainer/ jockey. With the money you have, you must purchase a horse from the crop of young animals available (actually, it is best to buy two or three at first so you can rotate them each week). Enter them into the weekly races to earn yourself some



GALLOP RACER









more cash while raising your reputation. You'll also want to start putting your stallions out to stud in hopes of raising your own prize-winning horses someday.

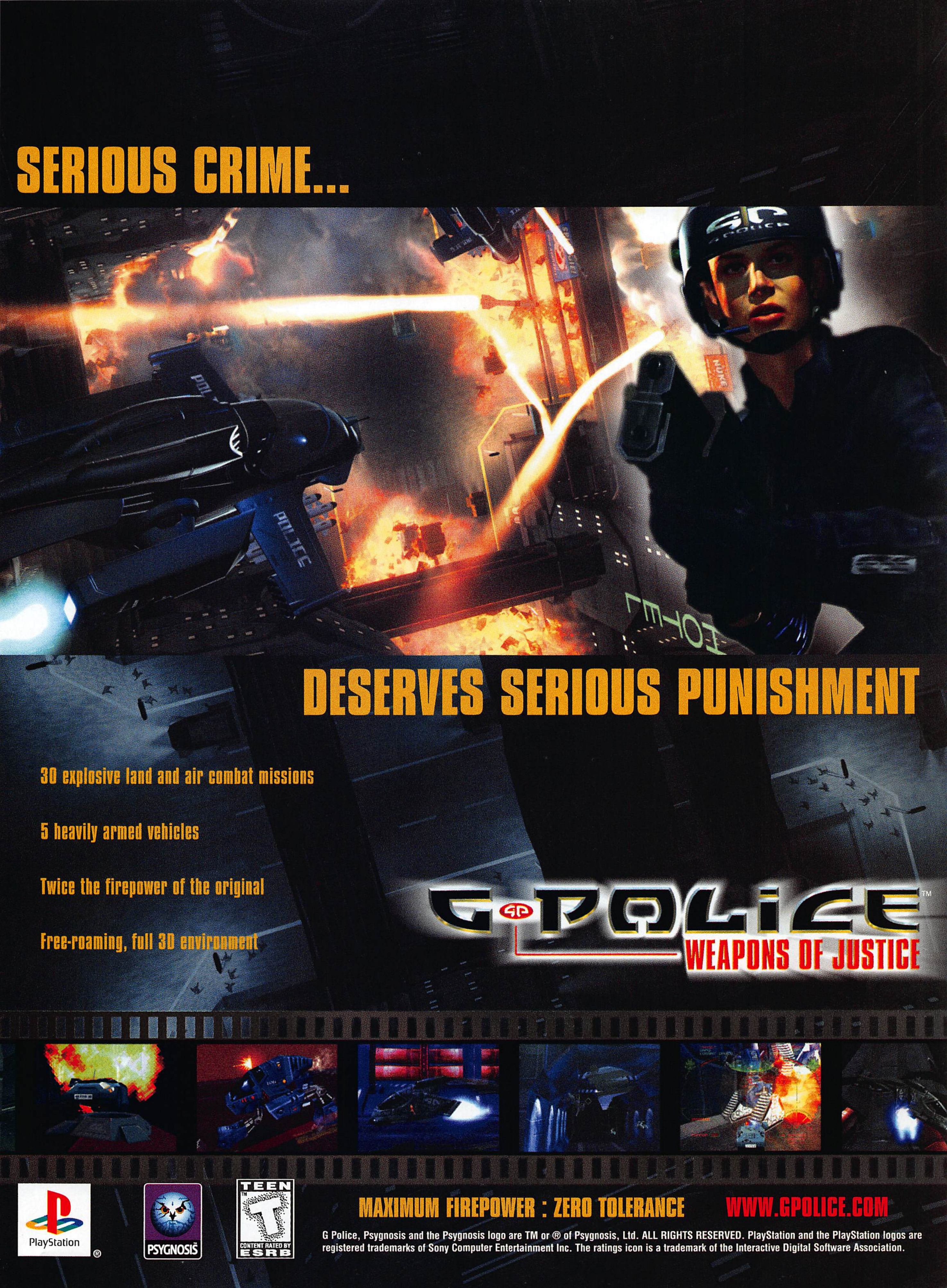
That's the game. You spend half of your time in the managing window, inspecting your horses and stats, and the other half of the time on the track. The manager interface is easy and quite utilitarian, while the racing sequences feature some great graphics and good (albeit sparse) gameplay. The key to winning the races is knowing your horse and developing a strategy around its strengths and weaknesses. You are constantly paying out money for your upkeep costs, so it is a real battle to remain in the black.

O.K., so it doesn't have the most riveting gameplay or any break-through concepts or features; but it doesn't matter. Somehow, *Gallop Racer* maintains your interest. This game definitely isn't for everyone, but I encourage everyone to try it out. You just may be surprised.

It's been ten years and The Judge is still waiting for the trifecta to come in.



R REVIEW	THE JUDGE: GET YOUR BUTT IN GEAR, OR IT'S THE GLUE FACTORY FOR YOU!	DEVELOPER - TECMO PUBLISHER - TECMO	1-2 PLAYERS AVAILABLE FALL	VIEWPOINT SCORE :85


SERIOUS CRIME...
DESERVES SERIOUS PUNISHMENT
30 explosive land and air combat missions
5 heavily armed vehicles
Twice the firepower of the original
Free-roaming, full 3D environment
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R/C STUNT COPTER





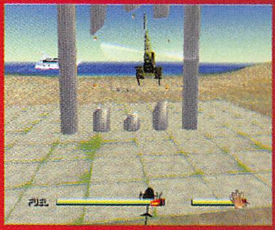


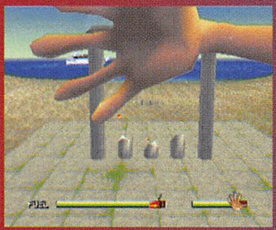
Over a year ago, ECM and I were both excited about this game. Practically requiring a Dual Shock to play, *R/C Stunt Copter* is challenging because of its realistic flight physics and precise analog control. In theory, you can play without a Dual Shock, but you're missing 90% of the experience. I'll warn you now, gamers lacking analog skills need not apply. In fact, the marketing types claim this is a game for RC copter fans, but it also appeals to hard-core gamers looking for a challenging change of pace.

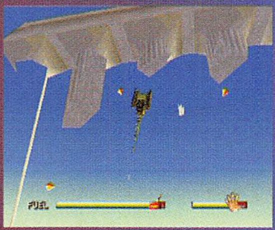
The controls are so unique they're worth mentioning. Left analog controls rotor rotation and hovering height. Right analog controls banking. Unlike racing games, there's no gas pedal in the air, so you have to tilt your chopper and let the blades do the rest. Steering left and right is accomplished by banking to either side and building up momentum. If you thought *Ape Escape* tested your dual analog prowess, I dare you to try *R/C Stunt Copter* for just two minutes. If your copter doesn't slam into the ground within 30 seconds, I'll be impressed. Even though it goes against the hard-core gamers' code, I recommend following the tutorial through to completion; it'll help acclimate you to the complex controls.

Since I last saw this game, Shiny has added a lot of personality to it, by way of a very vocal commentator. His comments range from supportive to sarcastic; so if you have a fragile ego, be warned, there's verbal abuse in your future.

Unfortunately, there's one major gripe I have with this game—camera angles. There'll be times when the invisible cameraman falls asleep at the wheel, Cerberus-style, and you're stuck flying into the camera blindly because it won't snap around behind you. My Dual Shock for a *Zelda* Z-trigger!

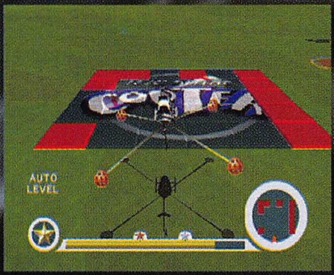






There's a unique two-player mode in this game. Originally, it was one player flying at a time, with the second player left yawning on the sidelines. But Shiny added a twist with the introduction of... "The Hand!" For a limited time, the odd-man-out can whip out The Hand to obscure his friend's vision. Not only that, he can move it around to really screw up sight. It sounds corny and stupid at first, but it's pretty funny in action.











If you think about it, *RCSC* isn't really complicated. But the sheer challenge of controlling your copter makes the game remarkably addictive. If you get hooked on *Stunt Copter*, you won't need to play anything else. So if you're the type of person who buys one or two games a year, this could be the one for you. All hard-core gamers should at least try *Stunt Copter*, before writing it off prematurely. Give it a chance and you'll be pleasantly surprised. E



R REVIEW	EGGO: COME FLY WITH ME.	DEVELOPER - SHINY PUBLISHER - TITUS	1-2 PLAYERS AVAILABLE NOW	VIEWPOINT SCORE :83


(*) Bonus Pack Includes:
• Free Magazine Offer • Collectible 3D Trading Card • Memory Card Stickers
• Special CD Offer* Includes: Music Soundtrack, PC Screensaver Program, Anime Wallpaper, and Selected Voice Files. *(small shipping & handling fee required for Special CD offer)
"Thousand Arms fuses hand-drawn sprites, beautiful polygonal landscapes, and interactive anime cut scenes together with stunning results."
-Gamers Republic
THOUSAND ARMS
Front
Back
ATTACK
SPELL
SUMMON
DEFEND
ITEM
NEXT CHAR
RETREAT
Kyleen
Do you think you can survive in this world by following the rules?
•Double disk RPG epic packed with theatrical quality animation and 12 hours of spoken dialog!
•The first ever RPG/Dating Simulation on the Playstation®!
•Unique combination of hand-drawn artwork and wonderful 3-D environments!
PlayStation
ATLUS
www.atlus.com
RPG
RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
©1998 1999 ATLUS. ©1998 RED Thousand Arms is a trademark of RED. All rights reserved. Licensed by Sony Computer Entertainment America for use with the PlayStation and the PlayStation logos are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Dual Shock is a registered trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. Manufactured and printed in the U.S.A. THIS SOFTWARE IS COMPATIBLE WITH PLAYSTATION GAME CONSOLES WITH THE NTSC U,C DESIGNATION U.S. AND FOREIGN PATENTS PENDING.







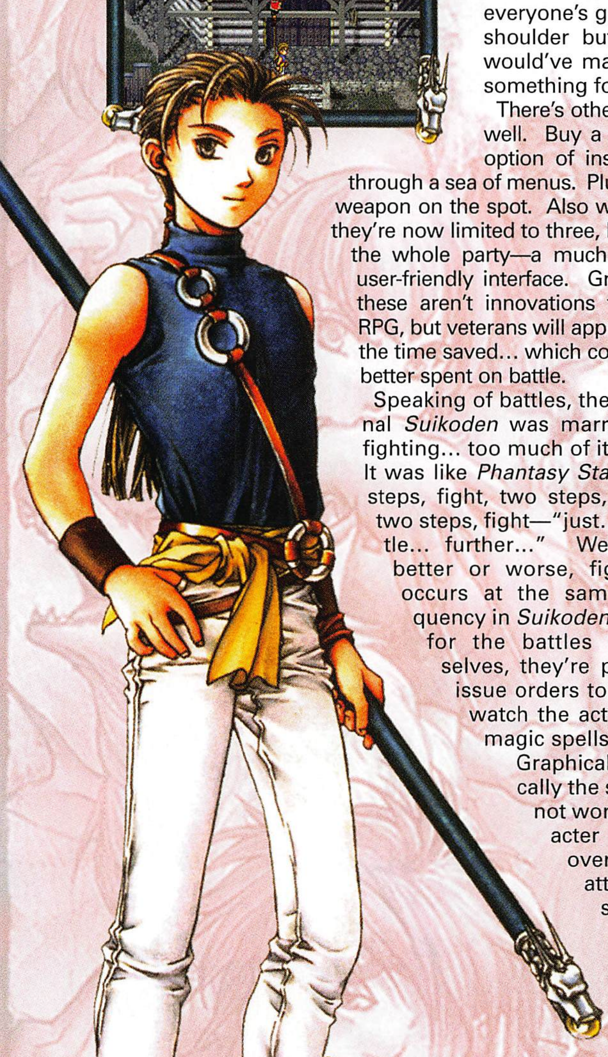


Suik

How do you improve a game like the original *Suikoden*? Simple: extend the playing time while making the game more time-efficient; plus, throw in nostalgic elements catering to people who played the original. That's what Konami's done with *Suikoden II*, a fitting sequel to the first game.

As mentioned in last month's preview, Konami addressed the biggest problem with *Suikoden* by upping the playing time in *SII*—now clocking in at a healthy 30-40 hours. But what's more impressive than the extended play life is the time-saving features which've been added as well. Of the 15 hours I spent playing the original, a large portion of that was spent equipping, transferring, and ditching items among all my party members; that tedious item management prolonged the game's life more than it should have. One of *Suikoden II's* best features, which likely won't be advertised much is the "best equip" command, which instantly equips the most powerful weapon and armor. Just hit that once per character and in a few seconds, everyone's good to go. Unfortunately, *SII* doesn't use the shoulder buttons to toggle between characters, which would've made it even easier... but hey, you gotta save something for *Suikoden III*, right?

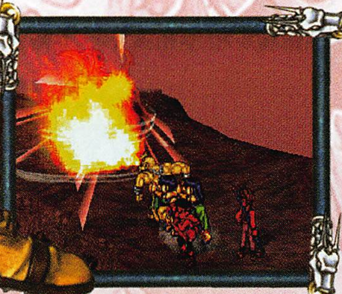
There's other convenient features which've been added as well. Buy a new weapon in a store and you're given the option of instantly equipping it, without having to wade through a sea of menus. Plus, you're instantly given the choice of selling or storing the old weapon on the spot. Also worth mentioning, instead of everyone holding 10 items or so, they're now limited to three, but there's also a large, community bag which holds items for the whole party—a much more user-friendly interface. Granted, these aren't innovations for an RPG, but veterans will appreciate the time saved... which could be better spent on battle.



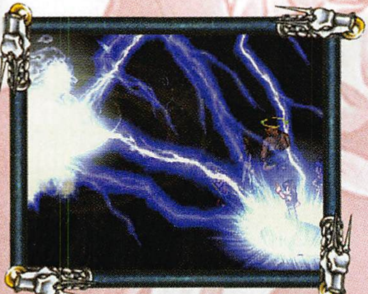
Speaking of battles, the original *Suikoden* was marred by fighting... too much of it even. It was like *Phantasy Star*: two steps, fight, two steps, fight, two steps, fight—"just... a little... further..." Well, for better or worse, fighting occurs at the same frequency in *Suikoden II*. As for the battles themselves, they're pretty much the same as original: six member parties... issue orders to everybody at the beginning of a turn... then sit back and watch the action unfold. There's nothing new to add here, except the magic spells include summons now, and they look much better.

Graphically, other than the aforementioned spells, the game's basically the same as the first. Any improvement in visuals is minor, and not worth mentioning. As a minor aside, I noticed variations in Unite attacks with the character Nanami. If you perform a multi-character Unite attack with her and it's clearly overkill, she'll amuse herself while the other character(s) do all the work; instead of attacking as she normally would; instead, she'll read a book, drink some tea, mend some clothes, etc.

Suikoden II has character. Not just quantity (the game has 108 playable characters again), but individual personality as well. You may not remember half the cast from *Suikoden I*, but there are names which should bring back memories: the blazingly fast Stallion, the forgetful teleporter Viki, or the storage vault guy Rock. Some of the characters from the first game return in the second, though it takes

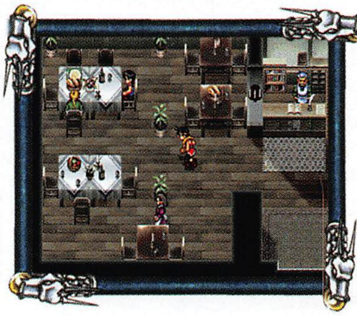








R REVIEW	EGGO: They remodeled the castle again? ‹groan› Now where'd the inn go?!	Developer - Konami Publisher - Konami	1 Player Available Now	Viewpoint Score :83





place years later. And if you still have your memory card save from the first game, *SII* will recognize it at the beginning, so you can start with some old characters already discovered.

If you thought finding all 108 characters was annoying, you'll appreciate this new character: Richmond. Once he's in your party, Richmond will go out and either recruit characters you don't have or provide hints for you to find them. The only drawback is he charges money for his services—a mercenary headhunter, if you will. Thankfully, Stallion and Viki are back, so once you find them, travel will be much easier (Stallion lets you walk faster and Viki teleports your party from castle to town).

But if you don't have Richmond, or can't afford his fee, you can always use the Eggo Test to determine possible recruits. It's been my experience that if you talk to a character in *Suikoden* and they have a portrait, they can be recruited. Only the major characters with large speaking roles might have portraits and not join your party. So if you're in a hurry, scour the towns in search of portraits. In other words, if Konami's artists didn't spend any time on a character (e.g., a random villager), neither should you.

You're probably wondering, "How does *Suikoden II* stack up, among the avalanche of RPGs sliding our way this Christmas?" Sadly, not that well. I enjoyed the first *Suikoden* a lot, but I credit that more to its timeliness than anything else (being the first "good" PlayStation RPG and all). In today's harsh world of



oden



RPGs, *Suikoden II* must fend for itself in an environment populated by deadly predators like *Final Fantasy Anthology, Final Fantasy VIII, Grandia*, and *Thousand Arms*. With stiff competition like that, *Suikoden II*'s lack of true story development becomes a glaring weakness (consider that it's hard to develop a cohesive story that involves 108 characters). After all, would you rather spend 40 hours with an RPG that's finding-character-driven or traditional-story-driven? This isn't really a knock on *Suikoden II* as much as recognition that the competition is that much better this year.

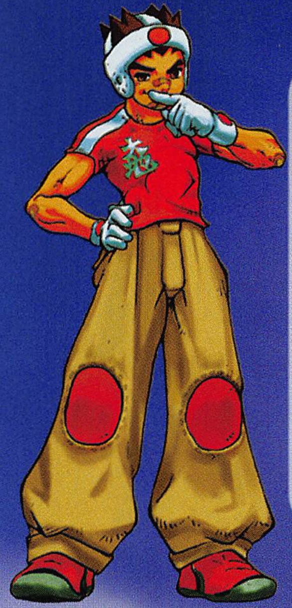
Eggo estimates there will be about 108 stars of destiny looking to hunt him down and burn him at the stake for not praising Suikoden II.







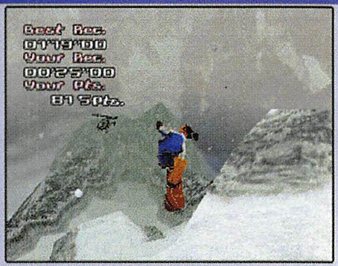




Capcom, the company who brought us some of the best fighting games ever, is trying something different. The *MegaMan* series enjoyed its share of success, and *Resident Evil* more so. But then we had *Freestyle Boardin' '99*. With a glut of snowboarding games to deal with already, *FreeStyle Boardin' '99* simply paled in comparison to *CoolBoarders 2* (which I'm highly fond of). And now we have *Trick'n Snowboarding*. I'll cut to the chase, *Trick'n Snowboarding* isn't as good as the competition.

The first thing you'll notice are the first generation graphics... in fact, first generation doesn't even begin to describe how poor the graphics are. Pixelization is as abundant as flies on manure... which is what I'd consider the frame-rate. It's slow as death and the game conveys no sense of speed.

If *Trick'n* has anything going for it, it would be the controls. Though not as smooth as *1080º* on the N64, they're more than adequate. The trick system (which the game is built around) is like any other snowboarding title—performing stunts is a matter of well-timed button presses and building up speed. Definitely not the most complex system out there, though the more difficult stunts do require an ounce of skill.







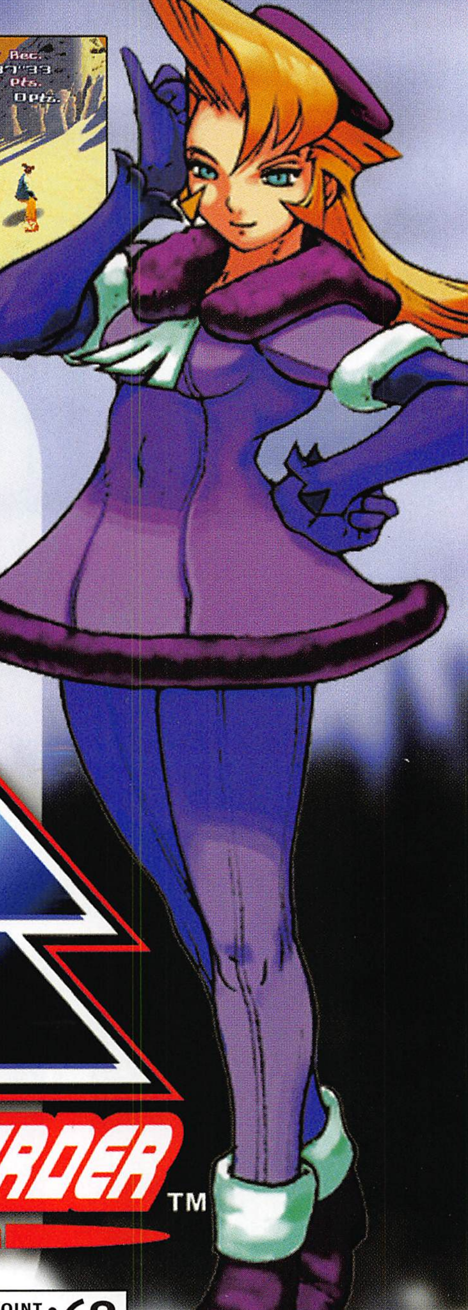




Trick'n does bring one new element to the crowded snowboarding table: a career mode which lets you take jobs for filmmakers. This mode is a pleasant surprise, but it doesn't salvage the game by any means. One selling point of *Trick'n Snowboarder* is the 'special guests'... that is, the gang from *Resident Evil*. Old survival horror characters are locked away as hidden characters, and even I admit to cracking a smile when going down a slope with a zombie on a bloody snowboard. Claire and Leon are selectable, and each has their own voice samples taken directly from the *RE* games.

While playing this rather weak snowboarding game, I kept asking myself: "Why did Capcom decide to translate such a mediocre title?" Then, it hit me. *Resident Evil* sells... snowboarding sells... Unfortunately, hidden characters from a popular series aren't enough to improve a game with terrible graphics and run-of-the-mill gameplay.

The last time Dangohead tried snowboarding, the enormous weight of his cranium led to a serious accident... But they said the kid'll be up and walking in two months.







TRICK'N SNOWBOARDER™

FREESTYLE SNOWBOARDING

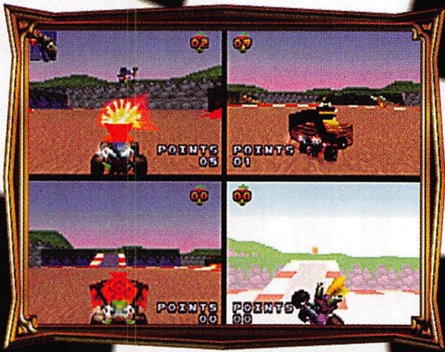


R REVIEW DANGOHEAD: LIKE FATHER USED TO SAY, "STICK WITH WHAT YOU KNOW."	DEVELOPER - CAPCOM / PUBLISHER - CAPCOM	1-2 PLAYERS / AVAILABLE SEP.	VIEWPOINT SCORE: 68

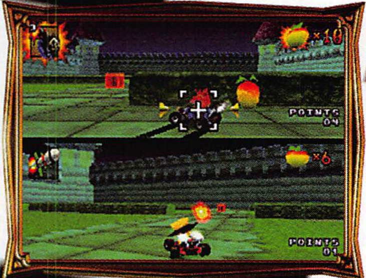












Way before Sony ruled the world, Naughty Dog and Universal signed a three game deal for a series that was to star a certain bandicoot. Naughty Dog's latest Crash game, CTR: *Crash Team Racing*, is also their last, since the bandicoot rights have been sold to Universal. Fear not, fans, Crash will continue with Eurocom developing titles starring Sony's favorite bandicoot, while Naughty Dog is moving on to develop a whole new game and character.

If practically every other mascot has made the move to the racetrack, why can't Crash? Let's see, Bomberman, Mario, Chocobo, Diddy Kong, Sonic, MegaMan... and even Chuck Rock (remember him?) have all had their own racing games. Now, it's Crash's turn. Thankfully, this adventure is just as exciting as his previous exploits. Crash and company get to ride around 16 super wacky stages. Of the 15 possible drivers, only eight are available when you begin: Crash, Coco, Pura, Polar, Cortex, Tiny, N.Gin, and Dingodile.

Combining the best elements of the genre so far, *CTR* uses a hub system very similar to that of *Diddy King Racing*. As you beat stages you unlock others and come across bosses. Nintendo's 16-bit *Mario Kart* had "cc" ratings, but instead of that, *CTR* has straight difficulty ratings ranging from easy, medium, and hard to the psychotic killer difficulty. In the tradition of

Hold on to your exhaust for some serious fun!







every kart game, *CTR* implements weapons that'll make you and your opponents watch for dear life. Missiles, potions, bombs, Nitro boxes, TNT crates, and clocks are all there to force you off the road—and quick. The clock causes everyone, except for the user, to lose some control, plus a psychedelic blur effect lets you know that the clock is in effect.

Not content to just mimic the competition, Naughty has added a twist to the Power Slide—a Turbo Slide. When a Power Slide is in effect, pressing the L1 button when your exhaust goes black will cause a backfire that can give your kart an added boost. Three Turbo Slides can be done per one Power Slide. Above and beyond the Turbo Slide is Hangtime. By pressing the R1 button, your kart can jump. If you jump off a cliff or get some airtime, your Hangtime meter will go up. If a specific airtime was attained during the jump, you'll get a Turbo boost when you land.

Not often does an unfinished game look or play this well. Much like Square fans (myself included) awaited the arrival of *Chocobo Racing*, I bet all those Crash fans out there are salivating at the idea of getting their hands on this one. The difference here is that *CTR* is as good as one would expect, if not better. Cart racing is back in style! We'll definitely be keeping an eye on this title! **C**



P PREVIEW	CERBERUS: CRASH AND BURN, BABY, CRASH AND BURN...	DEVELOPER - NAUGHTY DOG PUBLISHER - SCEA	1-4 PLAYERS AVAILABLE NOV.

THE LAST REVELATION
TOMB RAIDER





Heading out to Derby, England might sound like a form of punishment, but when it's to get a preview of Tomb Raider 4 at Core's studio, the 11-hour flight is worth the effort. After getting an interview from Core front-man Jeremy Smith, I was taken around the studio and shown the development process for TR4. Look for a review just before the November release date (around the time that ECM forgives me for not bringing back an Arsenal Sega shirt for him).

How many times have you seen it? An amazing product, perhaps even revolutionary, which gets progressively worse with each sequel. Sub-par follow-ups are sadly the norm; only a smattering of sequels (*Aliens*, for example) ever manage to exceed the original's magic. Remember the last two *Batman* movies? (I'm still haunted by the line "Not just friends... *partners*!") They stand as tragic examples of this disheartening rule of diminishing returns. Fortunately, this phenomenon hasn't gone unnoticed at Core Ltd., who is currently prepping the fourth installment of its biggest franchise, *Tomb Raider*. Some would say that Lara Croft is getting old and her exploits tired. Some might even suggest that her peak was actually the first *TR*. Core, though, is willing to bet naysayers that they have some new tricks for this old dog.

With *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation* (notice how it's not called *TR4*), Core has decided to employ the best features of Lara's first adventure, and redesign the weaker points that many critics have harped on. This time out, nothing will be superficial—everything will have a purpose, starting with the plot. Atmosphere will no longer be created by merely placing Lara in crisply-textured locales, but instead by crafting a suspense laden story which takes place in a single country: Egypt.

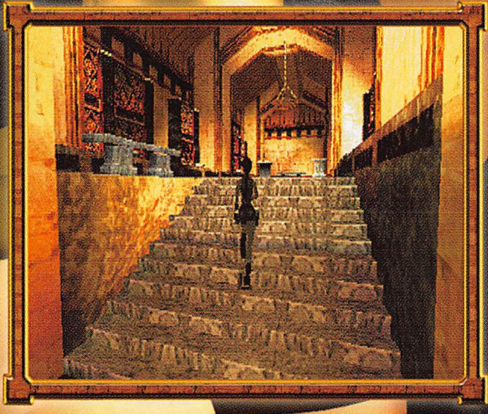
The game's initial plot point has Lara awakening the demonic Set (big oops), an evil force with the power to destroy the world. Duty and conscience calls, and Lara's forced to banish him before the world goes boom. As she fights Set, Lara meets old friends (such as her mentor and former 'boyfriend') and encounters new enemies with advanced intelligence that makes them even tougher than those which haunted her in the past.

It's not *Tomb Raider* if it doesn't have puzzles, but unlike *TR3*, there'll be no massive globetrotting just to find a key. Every solution will be close at hand... completing it, though, will be the tough part.

Core is utilizing an enhanced graphical engine, which will produce pretty, new effects, such as dedicated points of light (no, not like that George Bush speech). Static light spheres are now joined by directed beams of light that will illuminate specific areas—very moody.

Striving for that perfect balance between mass market and enthusiast game, *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation* will indeed be the final *TR* game for the PlayStation. Lara's future is still unknown, but come on... PlayStation 2, anyone? **6**









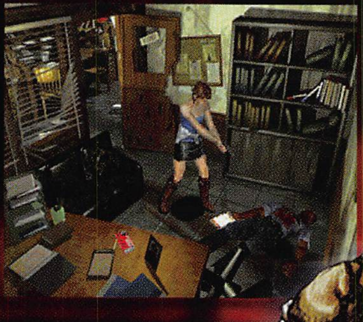
Developer - Core	1 Player	The Sixth Man:
Publisher - Eidos	Available Nov.	I like big guns!

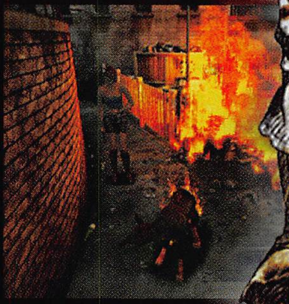
P PREVIEW

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Two years ago, Capcom scared gamers worldwide to the tune of a couple million copies with the release of *Resident Evil 2.* To this day, that very name causes Dangohead and I to shake in fear, but not because we're scared of zombies or breaking glass. Rather, we worked on the official GameFan Books *Resident Evil 2* strategy guide, devoting countless weeks to the study and dissection of that game for strategies and walkthroughs. Call us certified *RE2* experts.

Now, Capcom's givin' gamers what they want: another chapter in a series whose license is as good as gold (...platinum even?). I'm sure you're all aware of Capcom's track record for milking a franchise to death (*SF Alpha Turbo Quadruple Impact*, anyone?). So you must be wondering, is my beloved *Resident Evil* fated to become an over-the-hill series like *Street Fighter*? Or will it age gracefully, like the venerable *Zelda*?





Well, judging from the preview disc we have of *Resident Evil: Nemesis*, I hate to say it, but the series is beginning to grow old. The engine, consisting of polygonal characters and pre-rendered backgrounds, is virtually identical to *Resident Evil 2.* Sure, there's the occasional graphical enhancement such as a fire or water effect, but if you look at a screenshot of *Nemesis*, you'll be hard-pressed to distinguish it from *RE2*.

Secondly, other than utilizing the same engine, *RE3* uses the same character animation as the last game. It shouldn't surprise me that Capcom, of all companies, is recycling animation, but is it really asking too much for Jill to have learned a new move or two (surely she must have picked up something in the five years since we saw her last)? Or even added some motion capture to alleviate some of that mannequin-like stiffness in her joints? She doesn't have to move like Gabriel Logan (that actor's the Kenneth Branagh of motion capture, aka overactor supreme), but almost anything would be better than the movements of old.

When there's no more room in HELL the dead will walk the EARTH









Ya know what, I take that back. Capcom did add a couple tricks to Jill's reportoire. First, a 180° spin move. Learned from fellow femme fatale Regina, star of *Dino Crisis*, this useful "about-face" comes in mighty handy, particularly when uninvited guests come crashing in... through walls and windows. Just hit back on the d-pad while pressing "X" and our lovely heroine will quickly spin around, without having to deal with that slow turning radius. Secondly, there's a rolling move to experiment with.

RE3 stars none other than Jill Valentine, a returning lead from the original *Resident Evil.* As of yet, nobody knows what happened to Chris in *RE3*, but considering he ran around Raccoon City armed with a pocketknife, my money's on the zombies... I dunno about you. Not only did Capcom return Jill Valentine, but they <ahem> modified her garb as well. What do you mean S.T.A.R.S. members don't wear blue tube tops and a leather mini? Oh! She's off-duty, John McClane-style... now it all makes sense. Just keep those shoes on, Jill.

P PREVIEW	EGGO: ZOMBIE'S REVENGE INDEED...	DEVELOPER - CAPCOM	1 PLAYER
		PUBLISHER - CAPCOM	AVAILABLE NOV.



There's plenty of action and excitement in *Nemesis*. As previously mentioned, Capcom's upped the zombie count, leading to some very tense side-stepping and dodging to stay alive. Sheesh, it's not even football season yet and I'm already forced to make Barry Sanders-like cuts just to survive on the streets of Raccoon City. Just like the last game, there's not enough ammo to go around, so you'll have to conserve rounds and move like ya got a purpose.

The story is just what you'd expect: Taking place after *Resident Evil 1* but before *RE2, Nemesis* follows the adventures of S.T.A.R.S. member Jill as she takes a wrong turn at Albuquerque and ends up back at Raccoon City. Now completely overrun with zombies, the town gets support from police, but they're quickly overwhelmed by the legions of undead. Jill is in the same role as Leon and Claire in *RE2*: trying to stay alive while thinning the zombie numbers out and uncovering the conspiracy at hand.

But in the end, it all comes down to this: It's another *Resident Evil* game. Does it really matter that the graphics are the same as its predecessor? When the first zombie comes busting through the window, the adrenaline will be pumpin' for sure, and all gripes about 'more of the same' are quickly forgotten. This, along with *Dino Crisis*, makes up a very strong lineup of PlayStation titles for Capcom this Christmas. We'll be back with the complete review faster than you can say, "Ada, Wait!"

RESIDENT EVIL 3 NEMESIS







White Hot Flashes

One feature which Capcom added to *RE:Nemesis* is plot choices. At key moments of the story, the screen will flash white, everything will pause, and you'll have to make a quick decision. In the scene pictured here, our buddy Carlos has a close encounter with the Nemesis. And once it's done with him, the Nemesis turns to Jill. Pop quiz, hotshot. You've got an eight foot tall, ugly, mutated white dude in a trench-coat comin' your way. What do you do? What do you do?

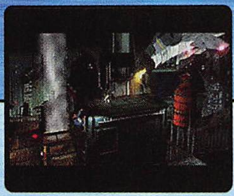
Jill's choices at this point are pretty simple. Stay and fight like a true S.T.A.R.S. member, avenging Carlos' death... or run like a little girl. Depending what choice you pick, the plot twists accordingly. And in case you're thinking that this is one of those *Suikoden*-type deals where either answer leads to the same outcome, you're wrong. I went with the gung-ho answer the first time, and the Nemesis proceeded to squish my head like a grape... On second thought, Bob, I think I'll see what's behind Door #2 and live to fight another day. You'll come across different endings depending on your choices. **E**

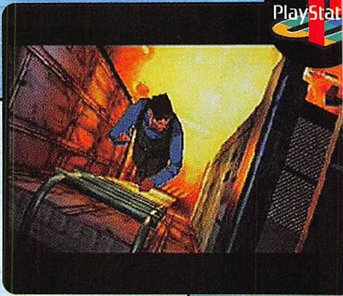




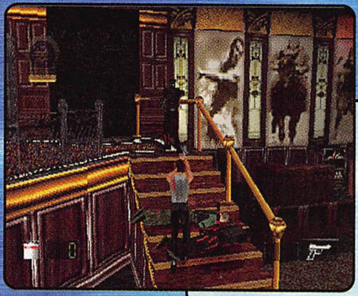
COMING SOON

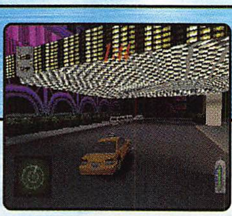
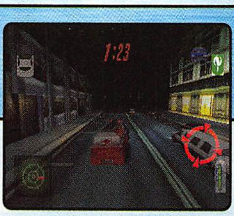
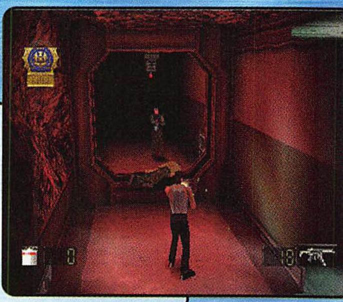
PlayStation

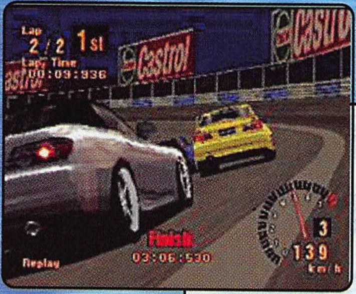
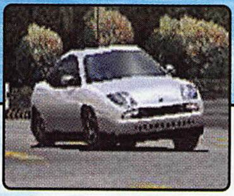



Fear Factor (Eidos Interactive) Anime style meets *Blade Runner*. Take control of a sexy lady operative as you plunge yourself into the world of Triad crime bosses. Slick styling combined with cool gameplay options; look out for this one.



Die Hard Trilogy 2 (Fox Interactive) *Die Hard Trilogy* returns with better graphics, better control, and new gameplay elements. Take control of veteran cop John McClane as you battle terrorists throughout Viva Las Vegas. Yippie-ki-yay...er, well, you know.

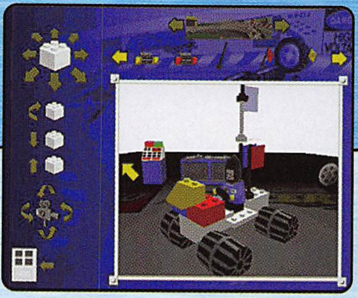






Gran Turismo 2 (Sony) Delayed for some time now, *Gran Turismo 2* is back on track with added visual effects, more cars, and that authentic GT simulation racing feel, this one is a sure buy for all PS owners.

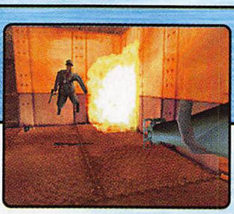
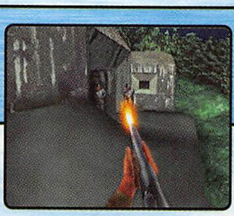







Lego Racers (Lego Media) While not as intense as *GT2*, *Lego Racers* is looking to be one of the most fun cart racing games this year. Build your vehicle from the ground up and become a Lego maniac!




Medal of Honor (EA) D-Day is tomorrow, but your mission begins tonight. Sneak behind enemy lines as part of a secret Special Forces unit, as you raid and sabotage enemy bases, fighting a silent war against the Nazis in WWII.


Juggernaut
Get ready for a roller coaster ride through Hell. Juggernaut will take you on a journey through time and space that could prove to be the most frightening and puzzling experience ever on a video game. Demonic possession, murder, and ghostly vendettas are some of the terrors that you will be forced to confront as you make your way through this 3 disc epic of horror. If your nerves and your intellect are good enough, Juggernaut will amply reward those who accept the challenge of this trip through dementia.
MATURE
M
AGES 17+
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
www.jaleco.com
JUGGERNAUT © 1999 Will/Tonkinhouse. Presented by Jaleco USA. Jaleco and the Jaleco logo are registered trademarks of Jaleco Ltd. PlayStation and the PlayStation logos are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.
JALECO®
PlayStation



Are there any of you out there who don't know what *Ogre Battle* is? If there are, I am shocked, because this is The Last True Enthusiast Magazine and *Ogre Battle* is one of the great video games. A classic SNES title, *OB* had everything an RPG or a strategy nut could want: epic story, multiple endings, a well balanced attack system, and tons of different types of monsters. Those elements and the fact that the graphics and sound were stellar, made *OB* an instant hit. So where the hell were the sequels!? Last year we saw *OB* rear its head on the PlayStation, but that was nothing more than a port of the SNES version with a few enhancements... lame.

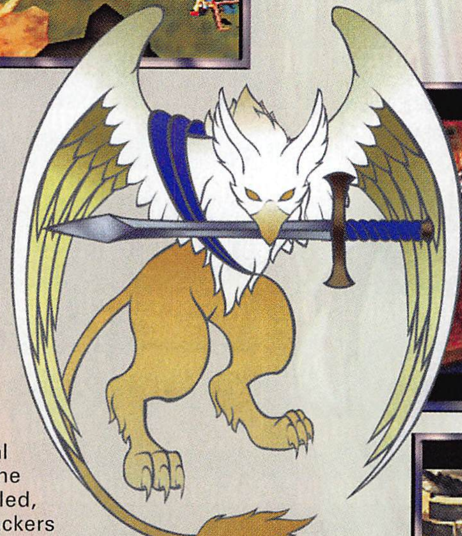
Fans rejoice, because *Ogre Battle* is back! Currently in Japan, gamers are gobbling up the newest ogre opus, and, while the release date for the States has yet to be determined, you can bet that you'll have the option to play this highly anticipated sequel on your N64.

A cautionary note: Don't expect the kind of facelift *Final Fantasy* got when it hit number seven. *Ogre Battle 64* is a far cry from the visual wizardry seen in any of the games developed by Rare or Iguana. Don't expect to see the library of monsters and classes to increase much either, because they haven't. Every unit you see in *OB 64* you'll already have seen in its predecessor. There are a couple of newbies floating around, like the little packs of pikemen that you can put in your front ranks. These guys come grouped in threes (meaning that a total of nine can be placed in the front row of your squad) and as they lose hit points, the little fellas start dying off. Three pikemen will become two, two will become one, and so forth. As the guys die, the amount of damage they deal decreases, but the slot is still filled, keeping the attackers from reaching your leader and spell casters.





Ogre







All *OB* fanatics out there are sure to have a laundry list of things they would have liked to see changed for a sequel. More level-ups for classes? Nope. The ability to ride dragons? Don't count on it. Actually missing from the game (brace yourselves) are the tarot cards. No longer can you call forth Loki or Merlin to whoop ass on the enemy; no longer



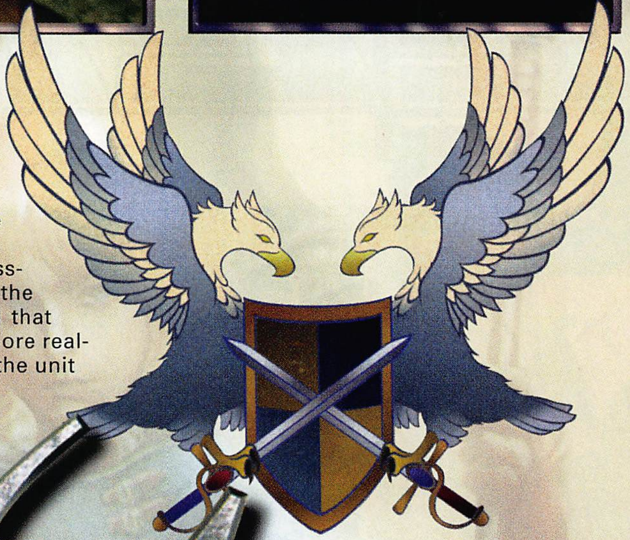




will you be able to turn night into day. The reasoning for this? Who knows, but I don't like it.

Not exactly the kind of news you wanted to hear, but gaming isn't always a bowl of cherries... Don't fret, though, because we still have no idea how many changes may be made to the American version. And you can still cling to the knowledge that, although the graphics and sound aren't pushing any envelopes, it still has the unmistakable look of a Nintendo 64 game.

So why get excited about *OB 64*? Easy; it has another deeply engrossing story, coupled with the same near-perfect gameplay that made the first one so unbelievably addictive. I also failed to mention [wink] that developers have augmented the battle system just a tad, making it more realistic and adding another level of strategy. For one thing, the size of the unit squad has been enlarged, giving you more options in setting up your formations. Also, you can now attack unit squads from the sides and back.



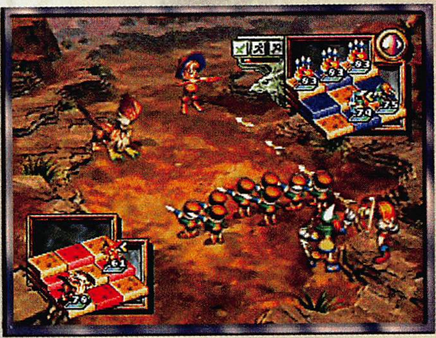
Battle 64





This means that the leader of a group can no longer hide behind the troops if he is flanked.

If you are a fan of the SNES version or even a newcomer to the *Ogre Battle* scene, this is a must to check out. I can say this without even having played the final, I am so confident in the game's pedigree.









Developer - Quest	1 Player	Judge: It's not pronounced
Publisher - Nintendo	Available Spring '99	"Oggree," dammit!

PREVIEW



Jet Force Gemini™



AND SO THE STORY BEGINS...

The once peaceful galaxy is at the brink of war, and the only ones who can stop it are the Jet Force Gemini. The guardians of the universe, the Jet Force are sort of like the Jedi, making sure that all of the peace-loving worlds are defended from scum like Mizar, the tyrant who is currently conquering parts of the universe. Most recently, the Jet Force's allies, the Tribals (who look suspiciously like Ewoks), have been enslaved by Mizar, and that has made the need for action all the more necessary.



CALL IN THE TWINS...

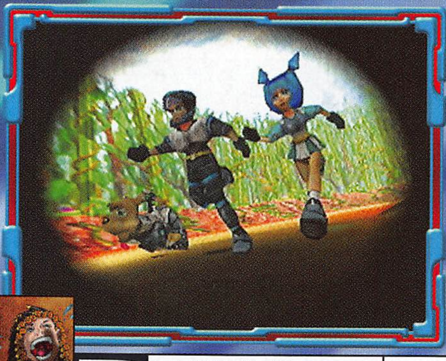
On the case are the Gemini Twins, Juno and Vela (an interstellar Brandon and Brenda), and their trusty dog, Lupus. Each character has different abilities that make them more suited for different levels. Juno can walk on fire; Vela can swim underwater; and Lupus can jump really high. You start the game as Juno, blasting your way through armies of ant warriors until you are able to break Vela out of her cell. Then, you have the option of continuing to play as Juno, or you can jump back to the first level and start playing as Vela, using her to access different areas of the earlier levels that were unavailable to you at first. Rare has designed the game so that many areas of the worlds are inaccessible unless you have all the characters. It's not necessary to complete all of these areas, but many goodies are available to those that take the time to complete these zones.

At E3, this game was more busted than Roberto Benigni's English, but it's come a long way since. The new character design is pretty cool (especially when they suit up in their mech gear), and the enemy and level design















P PREVIEW	THE JUDGE: WONDER TWIN POWERS ACTIVATE!	DEVELOPER - RARE PUBLISHER - NINTENDO	1-4 PLAYERS AVAILABLE FALL	VIEWPOINT SCORE: 89



are stellar. The weapons (over 20 of them) kick butt! You'll get to fire machine guns, rocket launchers, and hyper-shotguns; plus, you can wreak havoc with sticky bombs and cluster grenades. When you unleash the thunder of some of the more powerful guns, you will be treated with a rain of insect limbs.

There are also a bunch of game modes to look forward to. Multi-player offers some fun bonus games for you and your friends to partake in but also includes the title's weakest elements. In order to gain access to all of the multi-player goodies, you need to play through the single-player game. Much like *Motor Toon GP*, these modes are not limited to just deathmatch. There will be a *Super Sprint*-style racing game, as well as an *F-Zero*-like racing game, and a target practice mode.

The deathmatch will also be broken down into 'every man for himself' and cooperative 2-on-2 modes. It's this deathmatch play that's the aforementioned weak spot in *JFG*. The fact that it's played in a third person perspective (and the camera angles are sketchy) leads to some very awkward play.

You can also look forward to Floyd — the sidekick extraordinaire who hovers around Juno, Vela, and Lupus on many of the levels. You obtain him early on in the game, after assembling all of his parts, which have been scattered about. He was once part of Mizar's robot army, but he rebelled once it became clear that Mizar's plans were less than honorable.

Upon reassembling Floyd, you will unlock the game's two-player cooperative mode. While you control one of the game's main characters, a buddy can take on the role of Floyd, giving you added firepower and another set of eyes. The gameplay rises to a whole new level once you start using Floyd in this manner.





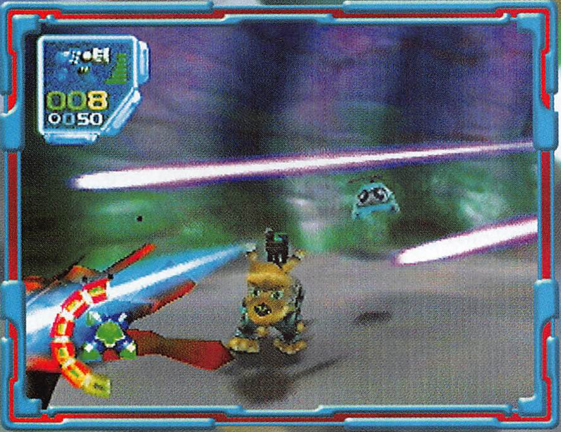
You can also expect some stunning graphics and sound, not that this should be to anyone's surprise; Rare certainly has a fine track record for beautiful visuals. Rare also has a reputation for fantastic gameplay — which *JFG* has. The tight control, many secrets, and non-linear story make for a truly engrossing experience. Much like *Banjo*, *JFG* has the kind of depth that only the best games are known for.

While much of the focus during the Christmas Season will be on *Donkey Kong 64* and *Perfect Dark*, *JFG* should have little trouble finding its audience. This could be a watershed title in the making.

While The Judge enjoyed Gemini*, he's more compatible with an Aries.*





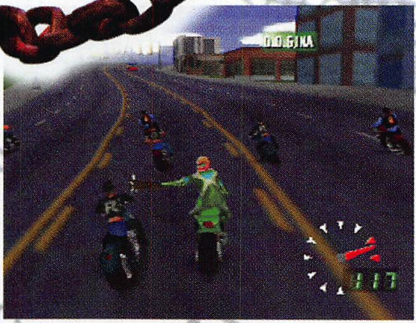








When it comes to 16-bit titles that I love, none gave me more enjoyment than *Road Rash*. Fun motorcycle racing combined with street brawling, *Road Rash* also had a cool AI system which remembered which biker you knocked down, and had that same biker chase after you later. With countless versions (10) on multiple consoles (Genesis, 3DO, Saturn, PlayStation, GameGear, Gameboy, and PC), it's a shame that the *Road Rash* series never made it to a Nintendo home system. Well, after a long wait, Nintendo 64 owners will finally get to experience what a 100-mph club feels like in *Road Rash 64*.





Developed by Pacific Coast Power and Light Company (*Nuclear Strike* for the N64 and *Jet Moto 3* for the PlayStation), *Road Rash 64* offers the same action which the timeless classic first introduced. Pick a bike and rider and hit the road, using whatever means necessary to win. If you're approaching a speeding biker, don't be a wuss and just pass him. Instead, give him a friendly bump or a quick kick to send him off the road. And if you're feeling really bad, a quick backfist or spiked club will do wonders. Gain notoriety with your racing skills **and** your deadly punches as you make your way through track after track, becoming the quickest, meanest hombre on the road.



RR64 supports the ram pack, but the difference between hi-res and medium-res is negligible. In general, the game looks like it could use more activity and color in the backgrounds. Buildings are very dull, and the backdrops are green, green, and more green. Frame-rate is passable, ranging anywhere from 20 fps to almost 60 fps, depending which viewing mode you're in (with letterbox, it's almost 50 fps). Character animations are pretty good, though our preview version didn't have crash animations. So crashing and having your biker fly from his cycle looks funny, yet strange, right now. Fortunately, four-player mode runs reasonably well, even in hi-res mode.



Gameplay remains the same as the original, with a few modifications. First off, you can choose to either arm yourself with a weapon or pummel other riders with your gloved fist. While this is cool, I don't understand the point of it. In previous *Road Rash* games, you were able to steal a weapon from an opponent if you used your bare hands. But I have yet to steal a weapon in this one. Controls are very forgiving compared to previous *Road Rash* titles. It's pretty hard to lose control of your bike, and sometimes you can actually crash, flip into the air, and land right back on your bike with little damage. Other than these changes, *RR64* pretty much rocks.

Sounds and music have taken a cue from *Road Rash 3D*. Heavy metal legend Metallica has signed up to excite players with rockin' riffs while they're accelerating down twistin' turns. All that aside, I hope Pacific Coast Power & Light will have time to fix the few problems that plague this game. And if all goes well, *Road Rash 64* will be a knockout title (no pun intended).







P PREVIEW — DANGOHEAD: HIT THE ROAD, JACK!	DEVELOPER - PACIFIC COAST POWER & LIGHT CO.	1-4 PLAYERS
	PUBLISHER - THQ	AVAILABLE NOV.

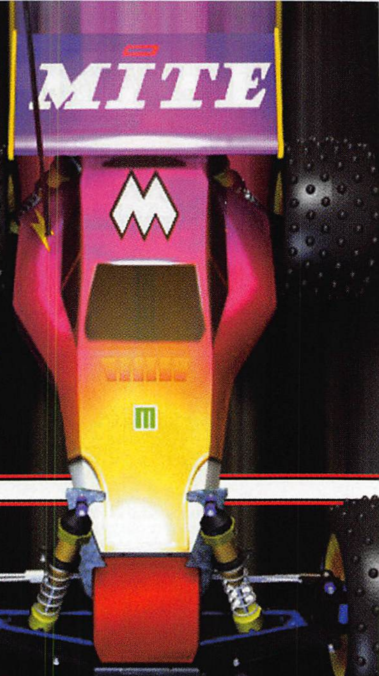


The first blast wiped out your Space Center. In just 3 hours, the high-tech weapons satellite will strike again...It's your job to make sure that it doesn't.
"Explosive N64 adventure"
...Nintendo Power
4 - Player Deathmatch, along with Lethal Tag, Cube Hunt, And Quick Draw.
Intense 3rd Person Action/Shooter
Precision laser-sighting aiming mechanism
Immense 3D Environments
Battle heavily-armed Boss Chracters and "smart" enemies
Rumble Pak Support
WINBACK
COVERT OPERATIONS
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RE-VOLT

Growing up in the sunny suburbs of San Francisco, there were two status symbols for kids. The first was a video game system, and the second was an R/C car. If you owned either of these, all the neighborhood kids would flock to your house in hopes of getting a chance to play. So every year, I begged, kicked, and screamed for one in hopes of being the "coolest kid on the block." Alas, it wasn't meant to be, and thus I resigned myself to a lonely childhood of tossing the Dangospear around the backyard. And so it was... until eight years later when Acclaim brings out *Re-Volt,* and finally I'm allowed to experience the wonder of owning and racing an R/C car.

While *R/C-Pro Am* on the NES was fun, *Re-Volt* is just as enjoyable. Plus, it gives the feel of how different R/C cars control. Speaking of controls, they're very simple: "A" to accelerate, "B" to reverse, and analog to steer. The tracks range from neighborhood streets to art museums to supermarkets, and you'll come across different power-ups on the road. Picking them up gives you weapons such as oil slicks, big bombs, and homing missiles. The vehicles themselves vary from sleek top speeders to off-road buggies, and each one has different stats for speed, control, handling, and durability. Add to this a ton of multi-player modes and one of the best track editors in recent memory, and you've got a great N64 game.

Graphically, it's a mixed bag. The single-player game looks great; the colors are vibrant and the frame-rate is silky smooth. Granted, there's pop-up in the backgrounds, and the weapon effects aren't exactly awe-inspiring, but these are minor gripes. Visuals in two-player mode are pretty nice, with little or no loss of frames, though playing in a vertical split-screen leaves much to be desired.

Anything more than two players, prepare to be disappointed. The frame-rate drops horrifically, and on certain tracks you can count the number of frames... without having Nick Rox's pupils! Only psychics should drive the four-player mode, since that tiny window prevents you from seeing the turns in time. While this doesn't make *Re-Volt* a bad game, it's a heartbreaker that four-player mode is so... you guessed it... revolting.

Despite the tragedy of four-players, *Re-Volt* is a great racing game with excellent sound effects and head-bobbing music. While it's not a serious title for the hard-core racer, it's a fun racing game which all N64 owners should buy.

When he was younger, Dangohead wished he had an R/C car. Now, he just wishes he had a real car.

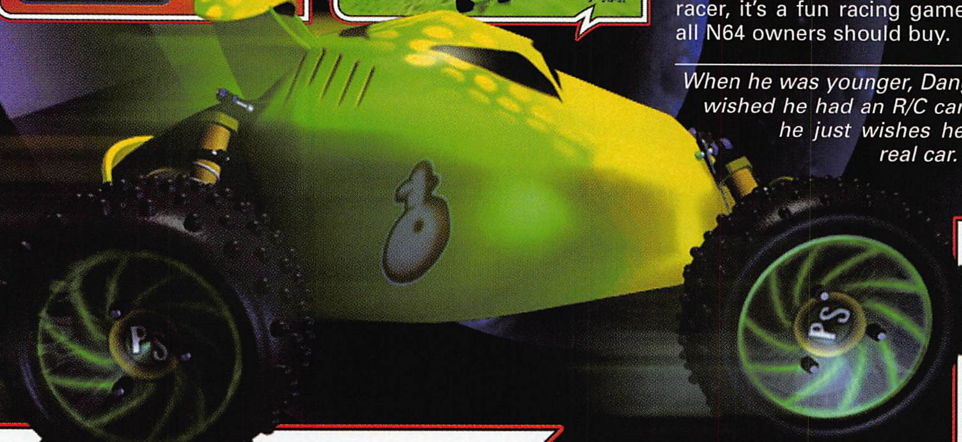


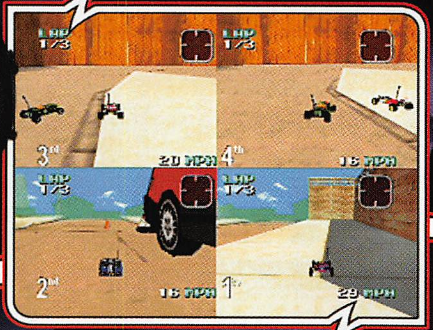






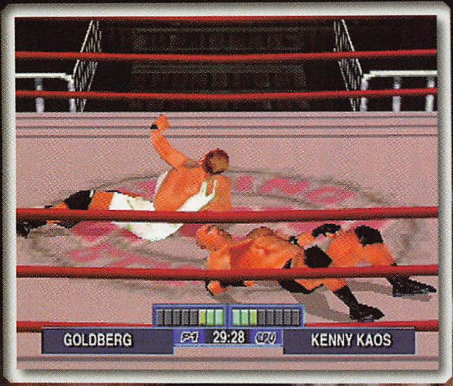






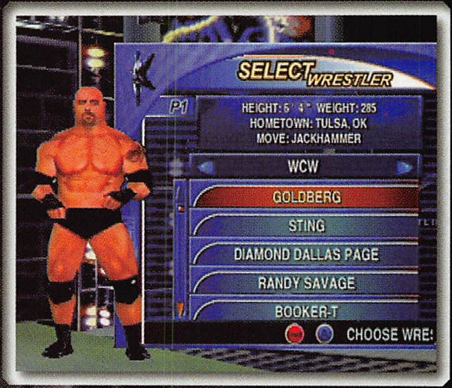
REVIEW	DANGOHEAD: *RC PRO-AM* REVISITED!	DEVELOPER - ACCLAIM PUBLISHER - ACCLAIM	1-4 PLAYERS AVAILABLE OCT.	VIEWPOINT SCORE :84


So many rats. So many ways to exterminate them.
So what are you waiting for?
Muffy, just one of the 6 Scratch Cat Heroes!
King Scarab is one scarry Boss!
Screen shots from PlayStation® game console
Up to four players can compete at once!
Over 50 action-packed levels!
Screen shots from Nintendo® 64 System
rat attack!™
The frenetic fun starts this fall!
PlayStation
NINTENDO64
www.ratattack.com • www.mindscape.com
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Developed by
pure entertainment
EVERYONE
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB









In my younger days, I, like most of my friends, subscribed to a well-known theory to help cope with overbearing parents: Saturday Night Main Event. For those who partook in this weekly testosterone-dripping ritual, the rules were simple—throw all rational thought out the door and enter a world of complete and utter insanity (or at least that's what my mom thought)!

I think it's safe to say that wrestling has made quite the comeback in recent years. And while some heretics (ECM, Dango, and Cerberus) claim that professional wrestling might single-handedly be responsible for the Decline of Western Civilization, I can see right through their jealous motives... They just want *WCW Mayhem* on the N64 all for themselves.

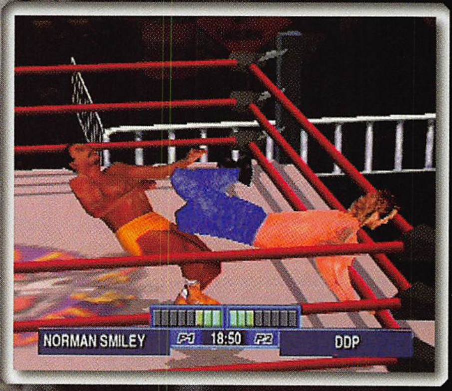
While the WCW license might not carry the weight of its popular counterpart, the WWF, it does (as a license) deliver a more family-oriented feel. According to the game's producer, Chuck Osieja, while the WCW might not have the darker edge of the WWF in terms of storyline, it's a much stronger license to build on because they have such a huge stable of athletes. In total, over 50 well-known WCW superstars will make an appearance in *Mayhem*.

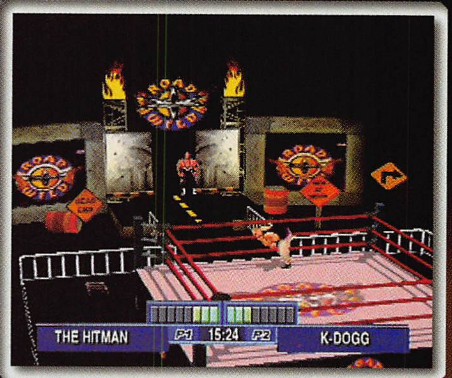
What sets *Mayhem* apart from the wrasslin' herd (as we like to call it) is the player's ability to take the action backstage. I'm not talking about throwing an opponent outside the ring and then following him down for an additional ass-whooping. Rather, in *Mayhem*, gamers have the option of battling it out in various locales near the back of the arena. Scattered about the floor are items such as folding chairs, tables, canes, and bats that can used as weapons.

While the graphics in *Mayhem* are decent, the real deal is the amount of motion capture the developers saw fit to include—600 in all! But what good would all those animations be without proper control?!? <cough> *WCW Nitro* <cough> All moves involve far less memorizing than previous titles, and for the most part the majority of controls are intuitive. Luckily you don't have to be a hard-core wrestling fanatic to kick butt in this game, all you need is the desire to bring a li'l pain!

If you're a true wrestling fan, there's never been a better time to enjoy the sport. If you're a gamer and a wrestling fan (the two are a dangerous combo) welcome to the world of *WCW Mayhem* on N64... who's next?

Fury recently got his butt kicked for showing up at a WCW event wearing an Austin 3:16 shirt.





WCW MAYHEM

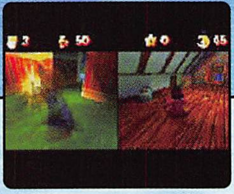
REVIEW FURY: THEY'RE NOT CALLED STEROIDS... THEY'RE "MUSCLE ENHANCERS."	DEVELOPER - KODIAK	1-4 PLAYERS	VIEWPOINT SCORE :82
	PUBLISHER - ELECTRONIC ARTS	AVAILABLE THIS DATE	


The Wild West Was Never this Wild!
Do you have what it takes shoot and slice your way through 10 action-packed levels and become the "Super Ultra Sexy Hero"? Rising Zan: The Samurai Gunman takes you back to the wild west of 1800's where, armed with only a gun, Katana sword, and some ultra sexy moves, you'll face a town full of the meanest, ugliest and weirdest hombres you've ever seen.
As you fight your way through this "sushi western"you'll solve puzzles, play mini-games, deal with bizarre and deadly bosses, and earn those ever important "sexy points" you'll need to become the "Super Ultra Sexy Hero"!
• Lots of 3rd person cut'em up and shoot'em up ultra super sexy action
• Use your six gun, Katana sword, or sexy combos to wipe out the bad guys
• Outrageous mini-games to play and puzzles to solve
• Hidden levels and characters
• Weird and bizarre enemies around every corner
"Quirky, offbeat, unusual, bizarre, odd, strange, peculiar..." -PSExtreme
PlayStation
RISING ZAN THE SAMURAI GUNMAN
agetec
"...quirky like no other game we've ever come across" - Next Generation
"...the sort of over-the-top anime slash-'em up the action genre has needed..." -Official PlayStation Magazine
"This game seems to have it all...." -PSM
agetec
agetec.com
Agetec, Inc. 900 Veterans Blvd. Suite 600 Redwood City, CA 94063
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MATURE M CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
PlayStation

COMING SOON

COMING SOON COMING SOON COMING SOON COMING SOON COMING SOON COMING SOON COMING SOON





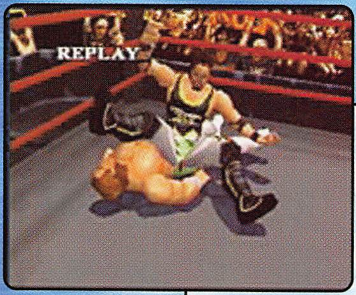


40 Winks (GT Interactive) A gorgeous looking 3D adventure, take control of two brothers as you try to save the 40 winks, that bring sleepy heads sweet dreams, from the evil hood-winks.






Space Invaders (Activision) The old school is always cool! And with revamped graphics, cool power-ups, and great style, *Space Invaders* will delight all gamers of every age this fall.

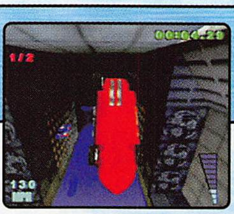
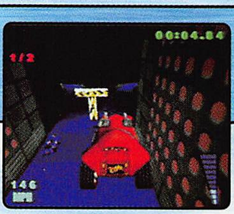
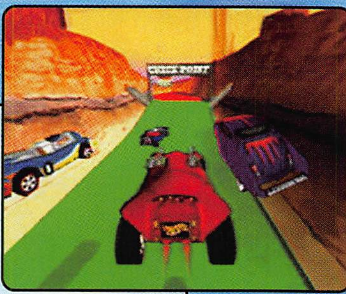







WWF Wrestlemania 2000 (THQ) Do you smell what THQ is cooking? Wrasslin' fans will rejoice this fall when *WWF Wrestlemania 2000* hits the shelves with new gameplay features and an awesome edit mode!



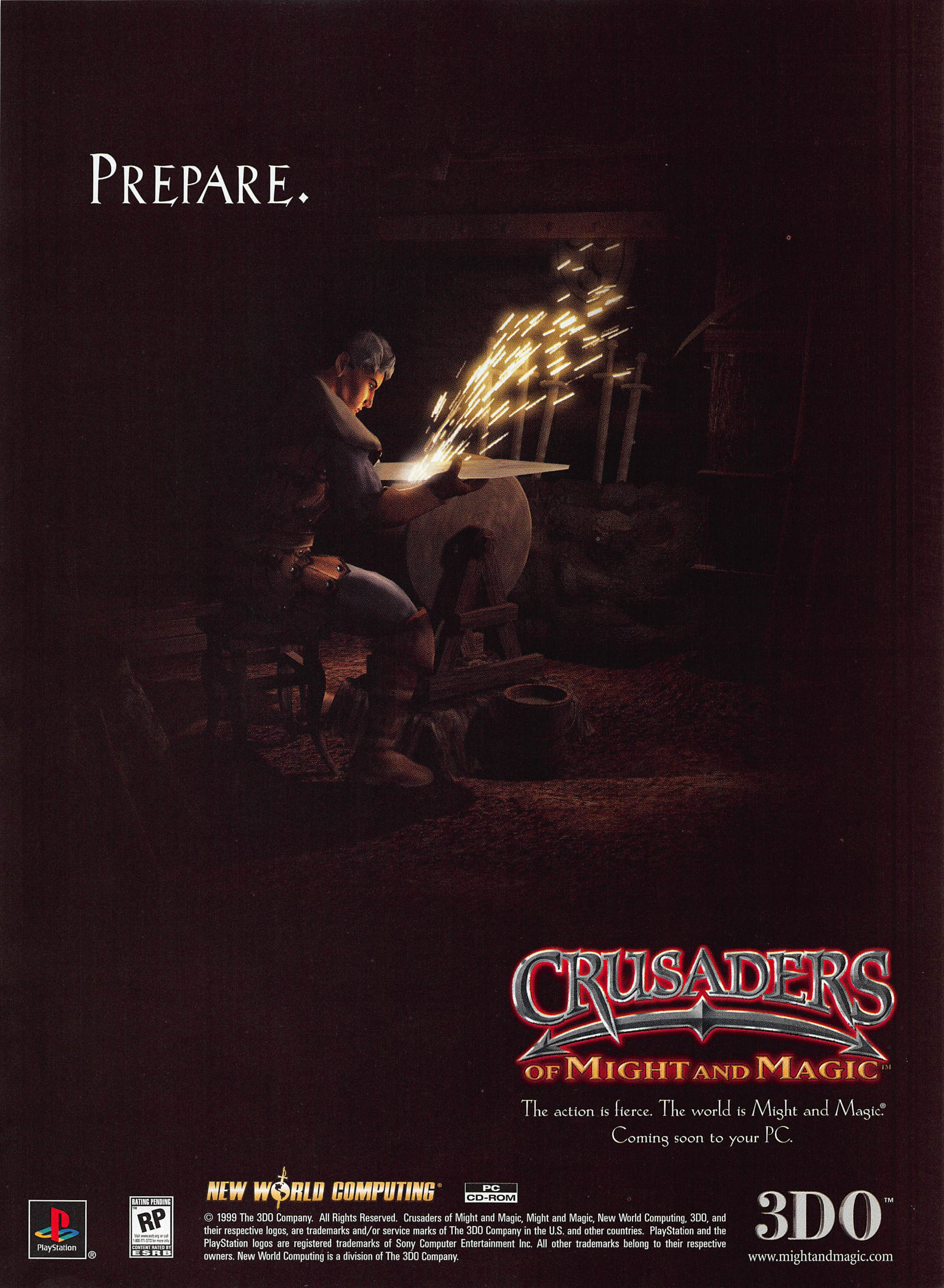
Hot Wheels Turbo Racing (Electronic Arts) Relive those old memories as a kid with EA's scorching new racing game. Take control of original Hot Wheels vehicles as you race, jump, and pull off daredevil stunts.







Paperboy 64 (Midway) The legend returns! Take a stroll down memory lane as you deliver newspapers on your daily route, avoiding all sorts of obstacles, and "convincing" non-subscribers to subscribe (sounds like GameFan).



PREPARE.
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Coming soon to your PC.
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PC CD-ROM
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Dreamcast

Reviews









Previews





When *Soul Edge* debuted on PlayStation, not only was it a faithful translation, it also had a bunch of secrets to unlock, added play modes, and a CG intro which is still regarded as the high watermark by which all others are measured. While many players bashed its gameplay for being simplistic and catering to button-mashers, *Soul Edge* gave us the first 3D, weapons-based fighting game. And in the stagnant world of fighting games, the smallest of innovations is applauded.

So, fast forward to the present, and now *Soul Calibur* lies spinning in my Dreamcast. When it first came out in arcades, *Soul Calibur* was welcomed by fans of *Soul Edge*; it boasted refreshed visuals, new characters, and more techniques—definitely a popular arcade title. However, come 9.9.99, ladies, gentlemen, and kids of all ages will be able to purchase *Soul Calibur* for their Dreamcast. And I have to give it to Namco on this one—*Soul Calibur* on the Dreamcast is the best looking game ever.



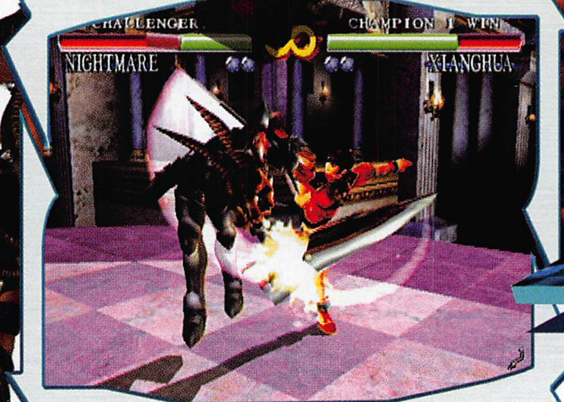
"You Have Learned All I Can Teach"

Yes, I said *Soul Calibur* is the best looking game money can buy. However, before I start raving about the glorious textures, brilliant lighting effects, and attention to detail, I'm going to point out *Soul Calibur's* biggest fault: meager depth.

When I say lack of depth, I'm not talking about characters—there's plenty of those. Nearly the entire cast of *Soul Edge* returns in *Soul Calibur* with most of their moves, plus almost everyone has a dozen new techniques to experiment with. Not only that, you've got new fighters to choose from as well. Bear witness to the swift sword-fighting





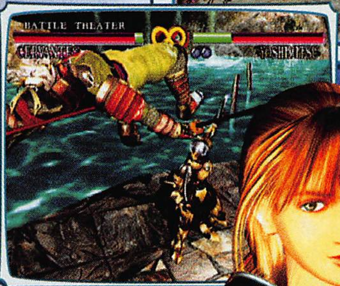


techniques of Xianghua, the stone-splitting staff stances of Kilik, and the nunchuck-whirling katas of Maxi. The game itself adds new, exciting features while stripping away old elements from *Soul Edge*. Air Control has been added to the game, which prevents other players from keeping you in the air with combos all day. Whenever you get knocked airborne, you can shift your body to the left or right to escape air juggles, though you could end up on the receiving end of a combo that's even worse. Air Recovery has also been added, allowing you to land almost immediately on your feet when knocked skyward. Parrying, which was originally featured in *Soul Blade*, has been enhanced; so now you can either reflect attacks or 'lead' their weapon, causing them to overswing and be vulnerable from the side. The weapon status meter is gone, as is the "lock-up" feature from *Soul Blade*. Replacing them is a new "weapon parrying" option in which a player can knock an enemy's strike to the side with a well-timed blow of his own. The new Spirit Charge replaces the Overdrive Attack from *Soul Blade*, giving players the option of charging a move to do further damage. And of course, the 8-way Run allows free movement in any direction while keeping both fighters locked on each other. This leads to faster-paced fighting, rather than the constant 'chaotic circling' of a game like *Ehrgeiz*.

With all these new features, you'd think many days of practice would be needed to master these techniques, right? All those new characters... more attacks for the returnees... you should need weeks of practice to master all the new strategies, right? Well my young students, that's not the case with *Soul Calibur*. Everything in this game can be learned by most hard-core fighters in a day. And with a few exceptions, you'll come to the conclusion that the game ends up being about who can parry more or get the open attack from the side or back using the 8-way run. Ah, but just because an expert fighting gamer can pick up all the basics in two shakes of a knights sword, doesn't mean this game lacks lasting power. In fact, this game is deep enough to challenge even the lord and master of fighting game depth: VF3tb. Best yet it's relatively easy accesibility will garner a far wider audience than VF will ever have, and will still keep the fighting game masters coming back for more, much like Street Fighter and VF always have. Has the franchise been given another shot?

























"All That Heavenly Glory"

There have been a few instances in which Namco's matched the quality of its arcade visuals with its console ports. But I can't remember any time where an arcade game looked inferior to its console counterpart. Yet here I am, playing *Soul Calibur* on the Dreamcast, which looks phenomenally better than its arcade ancestor. The frame-rate is higher on the DC (60 fps), backgrounds and characters are hi-res, more special effects have been added, stages appear more detailed, and floor textures are just incredible... <catching my breath>... do I really need to go on? What about this? DC *Soul Calibur* is the best-looking game ever, and if any game's worth buying for its graphical superiority over decent gameplay, this is definitely it. I'm not an advocate of "graphics over gameplay," but you can't help salivating over the gorgeous graphics of *Soul Calibur* on the Dreamcast.

Despite the graphical excellence of this game, I have a few minor gripes. While nearly all the special effects are astounding, there are a few which are strangely mediocre. Most of these involve the last boss, Inferno, who's probably one of the lamest final bosses ever conceived. I don't mind fighting a boss with no original moves (just attacks from the other characters in the game), but the gaudy reflections and poor explosive animation seem very out of place in this game. Secondly, *Soul Calibur* is without a CG intro. This is very minor I know, but with the *Soul Blade* intro still cherished as one of the best intros of all time, it's too bad that Namco didn't try to one-up its predecessor. Lastly, all the endings—for lack of a better word—suck. After falling in love with the in-game polygonal graphics, all I get at the end is a black and white portrait of 2D art, some of which isn't very good?

Still, even with these few criticisms, *Soul Calibur* is the most beautiful fighting game you'll ever play or watch. Character animations have been, for the most part, motion-captured from real-life masters of martial arts. And every character has a number of moves which'll make your eyes bulge, jaw drop, and heart skip a beat. Whether it's Kilik's pole vault wakeup attack, Xianghua's triple sword swipes, Knightmare's somersaulting slice, or Mitsurugi's double hitting unblockable... I could go on and on about every character's attack! Even these screenshots, which are of highest *GameFan* caliber, cannot begin to represent the wonders of this game.

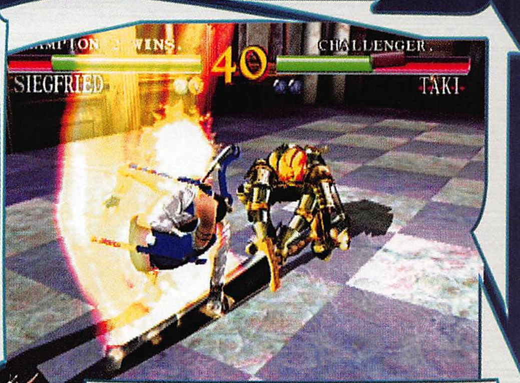


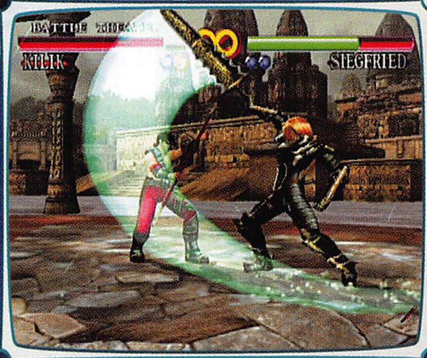












"Can You Hear The Grasshopper That Is At Your Feet?"

To complement the luscious graphics, *Soul Calibur's* sound effects and battle music follow the tradition of excellence that started with *Soul Blade*. All the music is comprised of orchestral melodies. Dramatic themes of bravery couple with harmonies of impending doom—an excellent mix of styles for the Muses. Despite the wide range of styles, all the songs retain that unique classical feel which fits this game like a glove. In other words... the music rocks the house, yo.

Sound effects in battle are incredibly realistic; if you close your eyes and listen, you can actually discern what's going on, just from the sounds. The clang of clashing weapons, the powerful thud of weapons striking the ground, and the battle cries of characters add to the excitement of a fight as it reaches its crescendo.

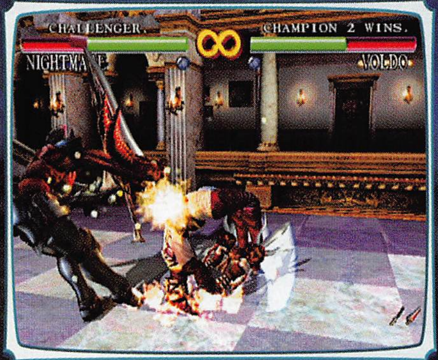


"Soul Calibur—The Legend Continues"

What more really needs to be said? *Soul Calibur* will be one of the best-selling launch games for the Dreamcast. I have to applaud Namco's efforts for making this game look incredible and play stunningly well. Tack on some great gameplay options and thousands of secrets to unlock (though some are just way too tedious), and *Soul Calibur* is not only better than the arcade, but it sets a new high watermark for DC games to come. If this is just a first generation Dreamcast game, I can't wait to see a game of second generation "calibur."



As a young boy Dangohead fought dragons with his wooden sword, now he just bludgeons them to death with his enormous head.







Viewpoint Score :90	Developer - Namco	1-2 Players	Dangohead: The Dreamcast legend will never die.
	Publisher - Namco	Available Sep. 9	

R Review


ROAD RASH 64
TM
TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB



180 MPH Slap in the Face, Anyone?
Special multi-player modes for up to 4 players Including Deathmatch, Cop Mode and Tag
200 miles of interconnected tracks and environments
Intense pack brawling, including grudges and alliances
Thrashin' soundtrack featuring Sugar Ray, The Mermen and more
Over 25 bikes and characters to choose from
New weapons and moves like the dreaded spoke jam
COMING SOON
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Hydro Thunder

H*ydro Thunder* has changed the way I look at the arcade-heavy Dreamcast library. Up until now it wasn't uncommon for the staff and I to get into fistfights about there being too many arcade games on the Dreamcast. Don't get me wrong—I love arcades; I hang out in them way too much (just ask my girlfriend). Anyway, my argument is that a ton of arcade games shouldn't be a selling point when I can play them for practically nothing at Southern Hills Golfland (a local arcade). The rest of the *GF* staff thought otherwise. Enter *Hydro Thunder* by Midway. Damn, this game's good! "Just as good, if not better than the arcade piece it is"—in my best Yoda voice. Now, I'm a Dreamcast lovin' fool. How's this for convinced... the day after playing through *Hydro* I drove down to Software Etc. and pre-purchased a Dreamcast, as well as half a dozen games.

So now that I'm flat broke, I'll tell you about *Hydro Thunder*. What was that? You didn't play it in arcades? Well, then you should be horse-whipped because you're missing out. But that's beside the point, *Hydro Thunder* is *San Francisco Rush* on water. Pure speed, control, and full-contact with other drivers—that's what I like. The medium and hard tracks and vehicles aren't readily accessible on the DC, since you must unlock them first.

Maybe *Hydro Thunder* reminds me of *Wave Race*, but the game got me hooked... and quick. You won't notice most of the time because of your speed, but the physics on the water are very realistic. On some of the later stages, it's more obvious that your surroundings toss your boat around like a rag doll. Much like *Rush*, *Hydro Thunder* has a ton of secret stuff for you to find, whether it's a shortcut through a waterfall or a miniature Titanic called Tiny Tanic.

One thing I miss is the arcade quality wheel from the arcade unit, but no biggy (and no, Sega's wheel doesn't count). I'll strap on a Jump Pack to my controller and won't even realize that I'm playing in the comfort of my own home. Be warned *Hydro Thunder*'s a straight arcade trip—no season or stats to tie you down. If that's what you want, maybe it's better that you hold out for something else. If you do, however, you're doing yourself a disservice. Go down to your local Blockbuster and rent this one, you'll be hooked. Long live Dreamcast!

Cerberus loves speeding through Long Beach harbor attempting to locate ramps and boost icons.

If the graphics were any more convincing you'd get wet from playing.



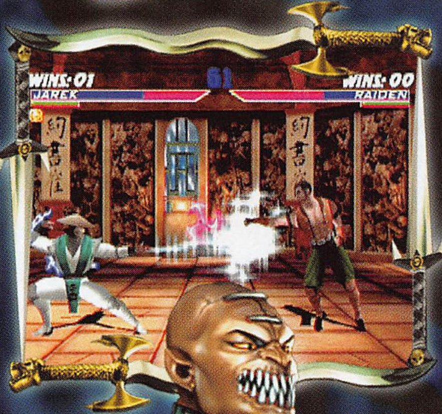






REVIEW — CERBERUS: WHERE'S THE LOVE BOAT?	DEVELOPER - MIDWAY / PUBLISHER - MIDWAY	1-4 PLAYERS / AVAILABLE NOW	VIEWPOINT SCORE: 95





If there's one thing the DC launch will be remembered for **other** than the staggering number of pre-sells and sheer number of titles available from the get go, it's the plethora of fighting games available at launch. Whether you're into Capcom, Namco, or Midway fighters, you're going to have something to choose from. Add the fact that *Virtua Fighter 3tb* is coming a month or two later, and you simply have the single best fighting game machine on the planet—bar none. Among the various and sundry entries, is naturally the DC-exclusive *Mortal Kombat Gold* from Midway. And while it isn't going to make as big an impact as *Mortal Kombat 3* did when it debuted on PlayStation four years ago, it'll make the *MK* fans more than happy.

Since we've already covered what's up with this newest entry in the *MK* franchise a few months back, let me quickly reiterate the feature list to avoid any confusion or questions as to why you should care, even if you already own *MK4* on another platform. For starters, the single biggest upgrade, and what gives this game its 'golden' shine, is the addition of returning characters Baraka, Mileena, Kitana, Kung Lao, and Cyrax, each with their trademark moves from previous outings. Beyond that, there isn't much that's new to this latest entry; so if you're not interested in them you're probably not going to lose much sleep over skipping the 'newcomers.' There's also all new CG endings for each of the characters in the game (which won't make Namco lose any sleep). At this point, the review ends for those of you that are not *MK* fans. However, I know there is a large percentage of 'closet' *MK* fans out there, so I'll regale the remainder of you with what's what.

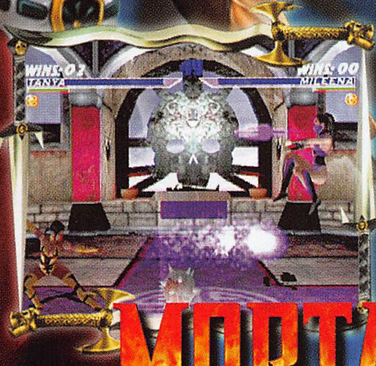
The graphics in this edition of *Mortal Kombat* are (obviously) head and shoulders above the PS and N64 incarnations from last year. In fact, they're also head and shoulders above the arcade original, powered by Midway's proprietary Zeus hardware. Slick, cleanly drawn textures with a decent level of detail and wickedly fast combat are yours for the taking. The only problem at this point with the visuals is that it can't really compare to the other 3D fighters now reproducing on DC like a band of promiscuous rabbits. I kind of question why Eurocom didn't go all out on the visuals, with even higher poly count characters and a lot more particle effects. Oh well, it's not like we play games for the graphics, right? Right?!

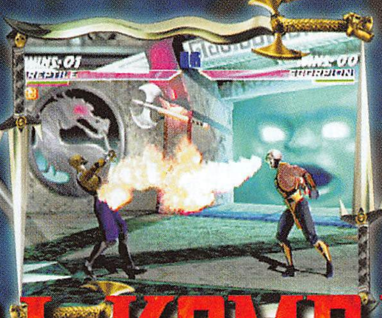
Gameplay is standard issue *MK* with dial-a-combo chains at your fingertips, as well as a return to the classic play that made *MK2* the king of the series. While the game itself isn't as ripping as its hallowed predecessor, it makes for a frenetic, ultra-fun casual fighter—a game that you and your friends can get into with little investment of time or energy (though there is enough there to keep you coming back later). Just try and stay away from the infamous 'jump kick' AI of the single-player mode; I'm still getting the willies from that.

So where does *MK Gold* rank in relation to the other DC launch fighters? Well, to be honest, it'd be the last one on my list. But when you have to go head-to-head with the likes of *Power Stone* and *Soul Calibur*, it takes a little bit more than a two-year-old fighter to stack up. However, with the new characters and CG endings, there just might be enough for you to warrant taking one more trip down *MK* lane. Heck, it kept me playing into the wee hours of the morning just to see the character endings... which incidentally, almost make up for the horror of *MK: Annihilation*... almost.

ECM complains lately of nightmares involving MK-style fights with his "evil" twin, MCE, in which MCE constantly beats him with just the jump kick.







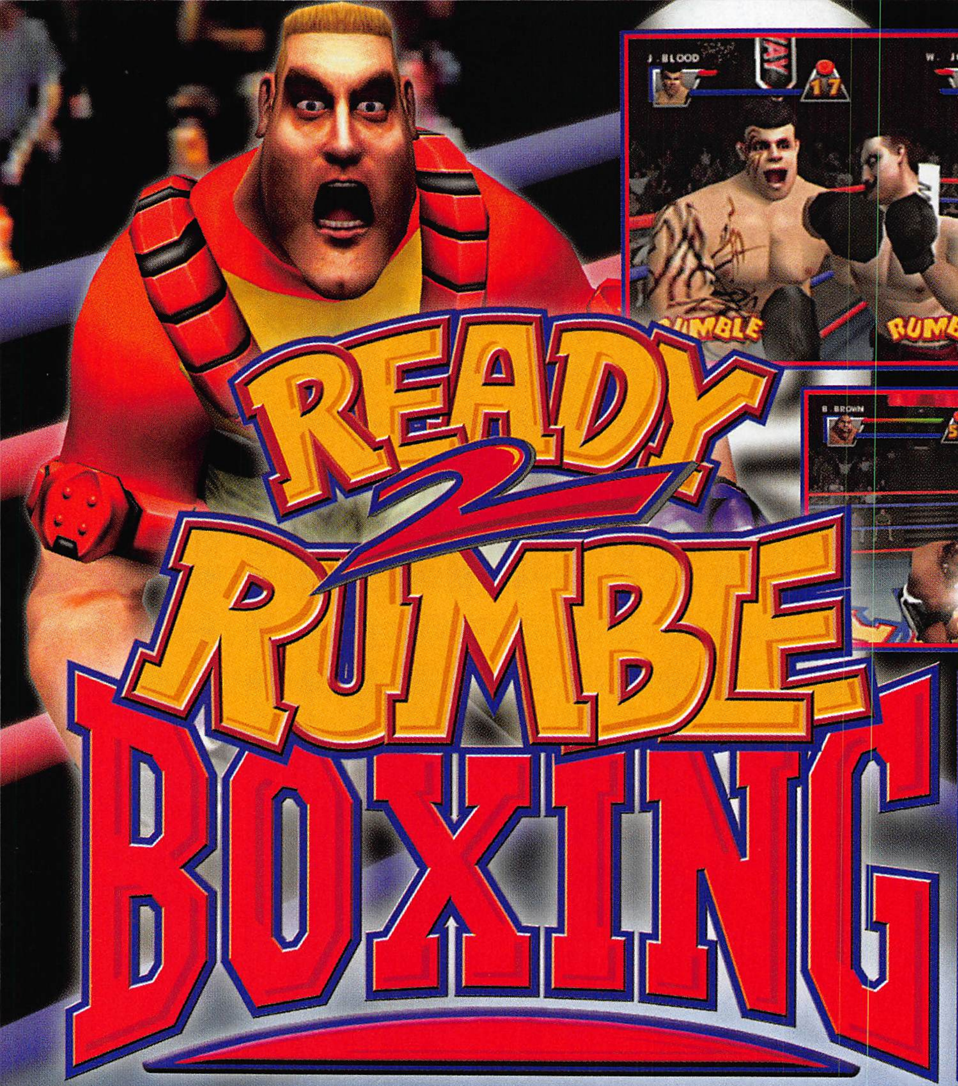


MORTAL KOMBAT GOLD

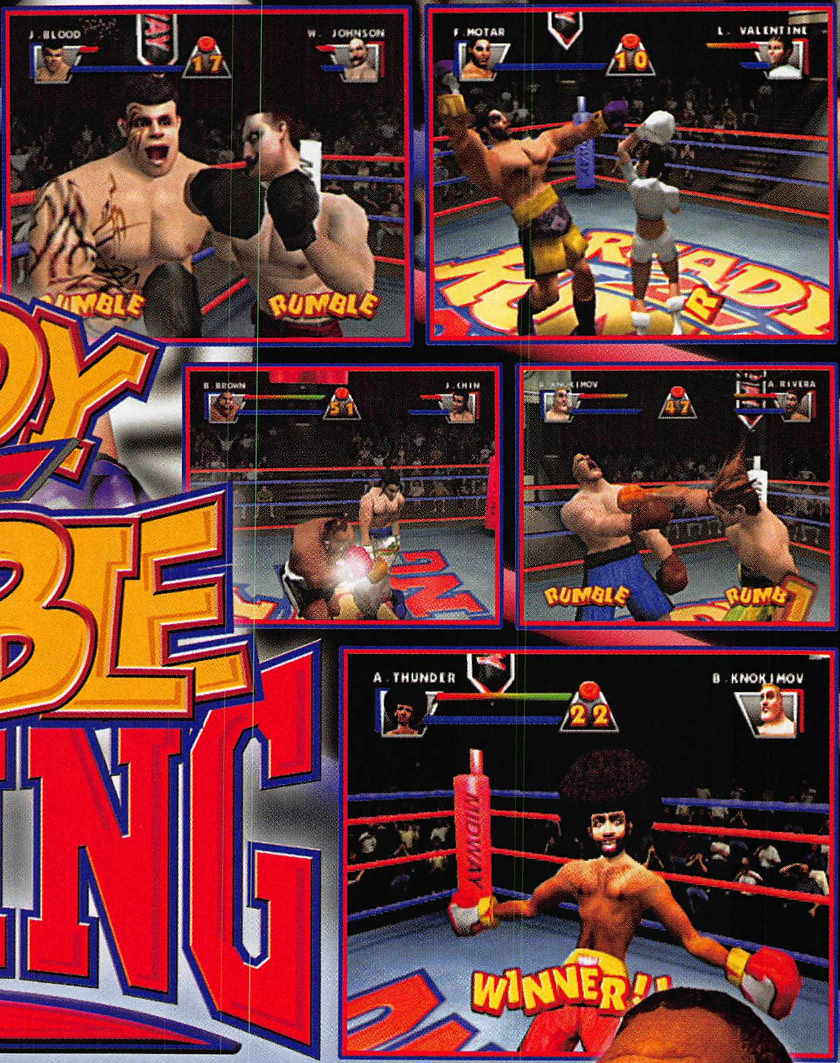


Viewpoint Score • 88	Developer - Midway	1-2 Players	ECM: 'Tis a flesh wound...
	Publisher - Midway	Available Sep. 9	

REVIEW



Ready 2 Rumble Boxing



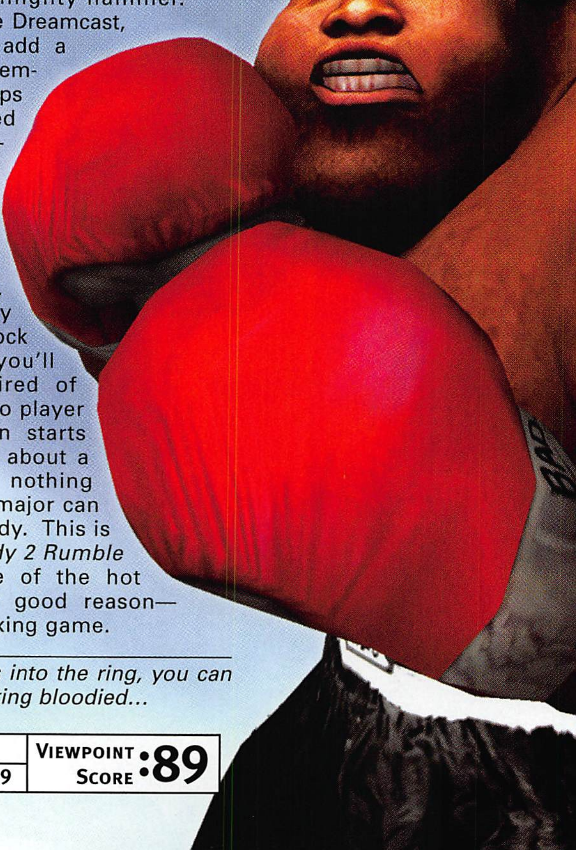
Who'd have thought that an arcade boxing title would actually more closely resemble the current boxing world than one of the other boxing sims? A cynic, am I? Maybe, but have you been paying attention to boxing lately? It's become the biggest farce in sports. It's a bigger circus than wrestling, and at least those guys admit the fights are rigged.

So here we are, back with *Ready 2 Rumble*. We argued a bit as to whether this should be in the sports section and decided against it. *Ready 2 Rumble* is about action and fantasy, not athletics, so it belongs rightfully alongside such titles as *Zombie's Revenge, Slave Zero,* and *Mortal Kombat Gold*. The first time we got a chance to play this game, back in May, we were pumped. So few boxing titles had been released, and most of them sucked. Boxing games need to be fast and responsive, not sluggish and tedious (ahem, *Knockout Kings*). *Ready 2 Rumble* gave us everything we had been yearning (yes, yearning) for. It was speedy, had fantastic graphics, and controlled better than any boxing title we could remember.

Well, we're still pumped about this title. *Ready 2 Rumble* looks better than it did back then, now sporting a hefty 60fps and a full one player mode (before you could only play multi-player). Each of the boxers has his or her strengths or weaknesses, and knowing your opponent is the only way to win. You've got your big, lumbering cement-heads and your speedy little dodgers. All characters have the same general punches, from short jabs and body blows to devastating haymakers that rain down from the heavens like a mighty hammer.

Utilizing the power of the Dreamcast, developers were able to add a myriad of different facial blemishes. Black eyes, busted lips and teeth, and panicked expressions make each contest both funny and more interesting (unless you're the guy getting thumped).

Ready 2 Rumble is a solid one player game but lacks any real depth. While you'll want to play through the game to unlock the hidden characters, you'll find yourself growing tired of fighting the computer. Two player bouts are where the fun starts (who'd have thought that about a Midway game?); there's nothing better than opening up a major can of whoop-ass on your buddy. This is great entertainment. *Ready 2 Rumble* will undoubtedly be one of the hot Christmas titles, and for good reason—everyone loves a good boxing game.



Whenever The Judge steps into the ring, you can be sure that someone's getting bloodied...

R REVIEW	JUDGE: DON'T CALL IT A COMEBACK, I'VE BEEN HERE FOR YEARS	DEVELOPER - MIDWAY PUBLISHER - MIDWAY	1-2 PLAYERS AVAILABLE SEP. 9	VIEWPOINT SCORE •89

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ECM's Note: If you already caught last month's lynching of Expendable, you can skip to the third paragraph.

While it's almost a sure bet that Sega's DC is going to be a runaway, sure-fire, absolutely damn near guaranteed success, there are forces conspiring in the development community attempting to see to it that it isn't an easy road. Case in point: the rampant proliferation and unchecked spread of PC shovelware that seems ready to infect the DC with a bad case of PC-itis. Now don't get me wrong—I like PC games as much as the next hyper-jaded console gamer—but if it doesn't spell Q-U-A-K-E, I don't have much tolerance for PC product. Now imagine my horror when it turns out that the port time from PC to DC is so short, cheap, and simple (Sega did its job too well this time out) that I can envision a world where the DC is drowning in bad PC products. Titles Sega knew better than to allow, but common sense was blinded by the lure of quick-buck licensing fees (when will they learn, <sigh>).



While I applaud the remarkably simple conversion process, I do question whether or not **every** upcoming PC game is a good fit for the DC. Obviously it's not a problem from the hardware side (the DC still crushes **all** PC gaming rigs), but it's a question as to whether the console gamer is going to tolerate wading through a swath of uninspired PC fodder (*Expendable*, *Incoming*, *Redline Racer*, et al.) in search of the 'good stuff.' The unfortunate fact of the matter is that promising PC ports (*Slave Zero*, for instance) are the exception and not anything akin to the rule...

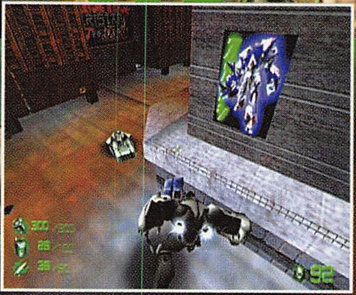
While still early, *SZ* has potential (and no, that's not a cop-out). After all, it's never **not** fun to run around in a big mech and smash things—it's one of those video game axioms... kinda like there'll always be another *Street Fighter* and 2D games are better than 3D <ahem>. With that in mind, Accolade has crafted a pretty solid title in the early going that clearly needs some dolling up before it heads to the Big Dance—perhaps a new dress, some nice make-up, and some serious etiquette lessons...

It's quite clear that right now *SZ* has some control issues. I'll spare you the usual 'if only it led development on console and not PC' rant and just leave it at 'Accolade had best spend a little more time getting the nuances of the DC pad down, instead of merely trying to duplicate the feel of the mouse/keyboard combo from PC.'

Graphically, it looks decent but doesn't measure up to the PC rev at this point. Considering the 'low' res of the DC version, I would've thought that there'd be more lighting effects, better T-mapping, etc. but no sign as of yet. Considering the recent extension in dev time, though, this will hopefully be rectified—no one wants **any** more graphically sub-standard PC ports (*Incoming* and *Expendable*, anyone?).

Now I sit and wait and hope. Hope that whatever the future holds, it's not a blight of PC games on an otherwise pristine console. Hear me now, Accolade, do not follow the lead of other less-caring companies (OK, I'm begging you, c'mon, please...). **ECM**









SLAVE ZERO

PREVIEW	ECM: Will the PC enslave the DC?	Developer - Accolade	1-4 Players
		Publisher - Infogrames	Available 1st qtr. 2000

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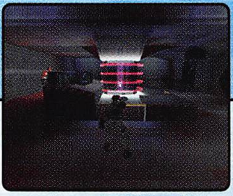
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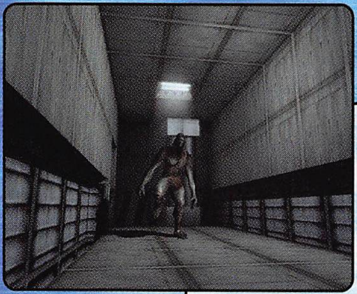
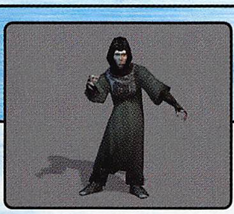
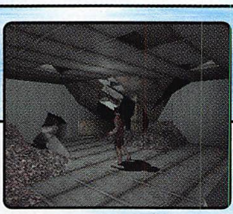


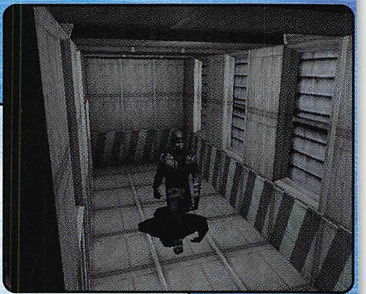

Croc 2 (Fox Interactive) That lovable crocodile comes to the Dreamcast with a huge improvement in graphics. Let's just hope they can fix the camera angles that plagued the PS version.



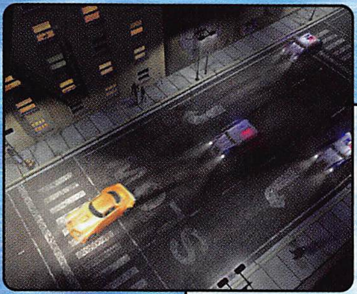
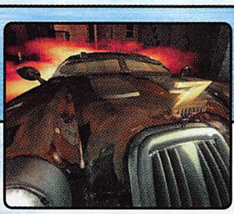
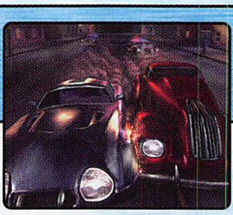




Fighting Force 2 (Eidos Interactive) So long, mindless beat-'em-up, and hello action adventure! *Fighting Force 2* looks incredibly detailed, and with the new "*Metal Gear Solid*" gameplay, this title should be interesting.



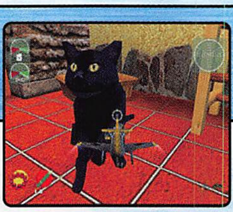
Planet of the Apes (Fox Interactive) Based on the movie and book of the same name, you crash land on a planet where monkeys are the high authority. Hmmm, sounds like a typical ECM nightmare.

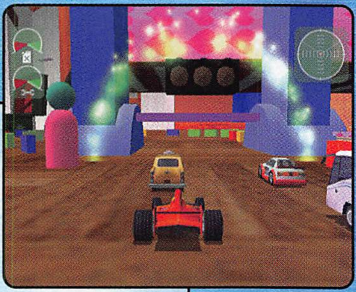






Deadly Pursuit (Fox Interactive) The tentative title is based on the TV show, *World's Scariest Police Chases*. Play as a cop as you chase down the criminals at high speeds and extremely large cities.







Toy Commander (Sega) Move over, Buzz Lightyear, these toys are mean fighting machines! Take control of a treasure trove of toys as you play through 30 mission taking place throughout bedroom, bathrooms, and kitchens.

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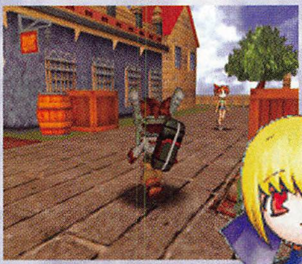
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Japan Now!

Evolution 2



While *Evolution* is coming to the U.S. in the near future, the developers at Sting aren't showing any signs of letting up. *Evolution 2* is already being developed as we speak, and we have the screenshots to prove it!



Taking place six months after the events from *Evolution*, *Evolution 2* will see all the original main characters return. Panamu Town has new relics and treasures to be found, as well as a new evil threat to encounter. Also, the plot changes depending on what you do in the dungeons. While looking for treasure, you'll come upon switches that not only open up new sections of the dungeon but also expand the storyline as well (called the "Scenario Dungeon" system).





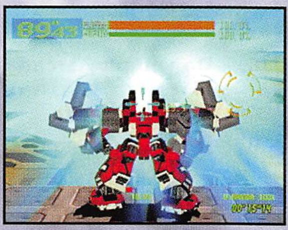
The visuals in *Evolution 2* remain the same style, but the worlds seem more detailed and larger. RPG fans can expect *Evolution 2* near the end of fall. **Dangohead**



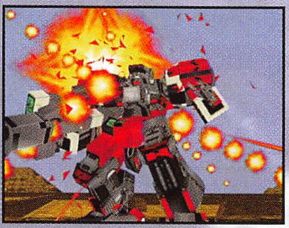




Dango's VOOT Watch

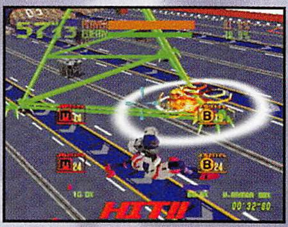


Couldn't get enough of our *VOOT* blowout two issues ago? Well, here are even more screenshots of this wondrous game coming to the Dreamcast! One of the most anticipated DC games in Japan, *Virtual On Oratorio Tangram* will be based off the current arcade version, *VOOT* ver. 5.4. While most of you probably haven't played *VOOT*, and therefore wouldn't know the difference between the original and version 5.4, well... I'm gonna list the changes anyway (for all three of you who do play).





While the graphics remain the same as the original, the changes have all been made in the gameplay department. First off, a percentage meter at the lower right of the screen tells you how much Virtual Armor remains on both your mech, and your opponent's (Virtual Armor is an added protective 'coating' that prevents missile attacks from damaging you from afar). You'll be able to easily figure out which weapons to use—depending whether you want to damage your target or deplete its Virtual Armor. All characters have been weakened in some areas and strengthened in others, leading to excellent gameplay balance. For example, now Angelan takes a long time to recharge her energy for attacks; she can only summon two shields at the same time (before she could do three); and her staff is longer, making her a good close-combat character. Computer AI is better, as CPU opponents will now evade your attacks with amazing dexterity. Close combat is not as limited as the original; you can dash-cancel almost every close combat attack, making it very fast and fun. And finally, all Virtualoids have replaced their Saturn booster packs with the much faster Dreamcast backpacks.



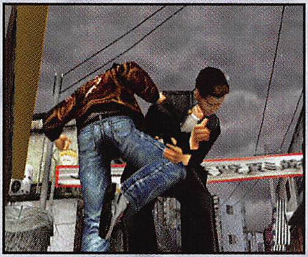
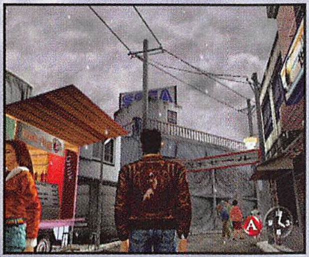


Though many of you will have no idea what I'm talking about, this is all you need to know: The Dreamcast version of *Virtual On Oratorio Tangram* will be a tuned-up version that will have better gameplay balance, more strategy, and faster close-combat. And while there isn't a specific release date yet, other than "end of 1999," when *VOOT* finally comes home to the Dreamcast, you'll know exactly where to look for the most in-depth coverage of this fantastic game. **Dangohead**

Shen Mue is here!

The video game industry is all about hype. While the hard-core crowd (myself included) might feel that a game should speak for itself, the reality is that with the right amount of properly placed PR, an otherwise mediocre title could be the next big hit. The recently released *Superman* on N64 is a perfect example of this. It's an awful game that's selling extremely well because the game has received a hefty amount of press (albeit negative press), since early demos were first shown in May of last year. A bad game with a serious industry buzz can go a long way in the terms of consumers. Either that, or Titus made a deal with retail owners to install mind-control devices in their stores... "must buy *Superman*... rational thought failing... eyesight blurring."

Sega's upcoming behemoth title *Shen Mue* is the latest game to fall victim to the horrors of over-hyped madness. And, like any true Sega-head, I have defended Yu Suzuki's newest endeavor to the best of my ability. "There's more than just *Dragon's Lair*-style



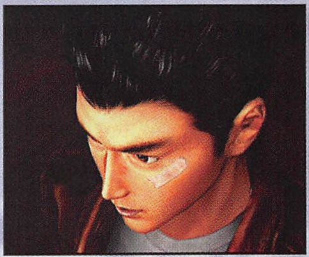
gameplay here, guys! And what the hell's wrong with *Dragon's Lair*?! Heretics! All of em!!

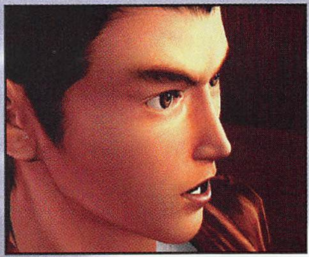
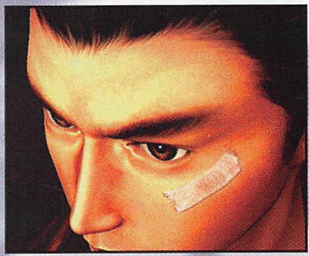
The demo, which is currently being given away with the purchase of a DC in Japan, is really nothing more than a glorified E3 demo. There's an arcade that features a working dart board game and slot machine that players can fuss with; they can also purchase sodas from machines that dispense brand-name beverages (*Shen Mue* is the ultimate vehicle for corporate sponsorship). The rumored free-battle mode is still a no-show (though players can wander the streets and speak with other characters), and at this point I'm wondering how significant this element will be to the gameplay.

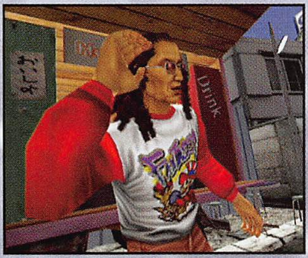
As a bit of a joke, Sega had the *Shen Mue* development staff throw together a little chase through one of the game's many virtual districts. What's so unique about this mini-game of tag is who you're chasing—Sega's very own pseudo-mascot (in Japan) and official company spokesperson, Mr. Yukawa. He's also the same guy whose picture is plastered all over the import DC box. No pictures of *Sonic* or *VF*, just some really cool shots of a well-dressed middle aged businessman—what ingenious marketing!

As I discovered at E3 and was reminded of again today, *Shen Mue* is a graphical wonder. My vision might be a bit tainted after witnessing the power of *Soul Calibur*, but I still marvel at the sight of *Shen Mue's* inhabitants. Also, the level of interaction in this game simply needs to be seen to be believed. No mag screenshots or online video (sorry, Hi-Fi) can justly portray the insane detail in this game... the term 'photo-realistic' takes on a whole new meaning!

Look for plenty more coverage of this unbelievable and super-hyped DC title when it finally hits store shelves this October in Japan. **Fury**

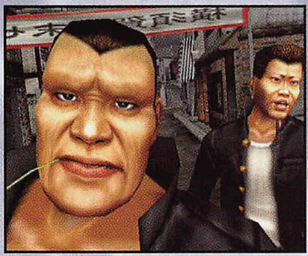
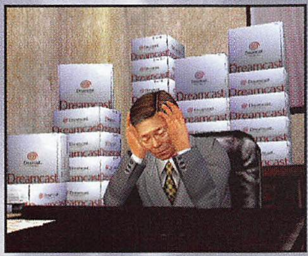
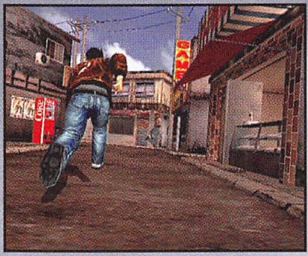


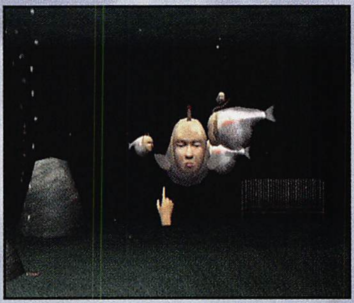


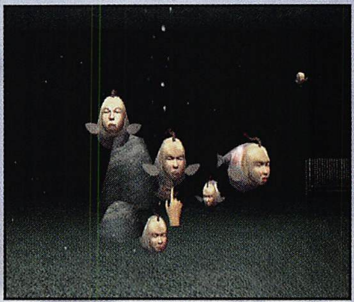




Don't Panic! SEAMAN





Deep in the heart of Woodland Hills, the 6th man stares at a television screen. Low grumbling sounds are heard, but Team *GameFan* steers clear of his babbling form. Time passes, and still the 6th man sits, speaking in forked tongue... Finally, after hours of solitude (surpassed only by El Niño's world-famous *EverQuest* binges), a single phrase is uttered... "Yes! My Seaman is alive!"

What could cause this normally rational man to go off 'the deep end?' The answer is simple—Sega's new Dreamcast game, *Seaman: The Forbidden Pet* (aka Killer of Productivity). Designed by Vivarium, *Seaman* takes the Tamagotchi phenomena of a few years past and builds upon it exponentially, allowing conversations (in Japanese) with the pet. Players are given a single aquarium, 11 pellets of food, and one bunch of eggs. After dropping the eggs into the tank (which must be constantly heated and filled with oxygen), the seed has been planted. After hours of watching, the payoff comes... Mutating into a vibrant, bitchy, virtual fish...

This is just the beginning, because talking to the fish (with the included microphone connection) is when things get really good... With a vocabulary that any kid would appreciate, the little seamen (come on, say it without laughing) will ask to be fed, turn up the heat, and respond to questions such as "How old are you?" Later on, when the fish have matured, the vocabulary will too, and discussions about your astrological sign or date of birth will become commonplace. The fun of 'talking to the fish' is not something that you soon forget, and when you hear one of your young swimmers sing *Feces* in Japanese, it will warm your heart (and give you a better appreciation for the Japanese sense of humor).

Another tank, which is dirt filled, can be unlocked, yielding caterpillar and butterfly Seamen (can you still call them Seamen?). When not playing the game, it will continue at a decelerated rate on a VMU (like the crystal clear one that's included with the game) until you return. Neglect the Seaman for too long and it will die (or worse, eat his brothers).

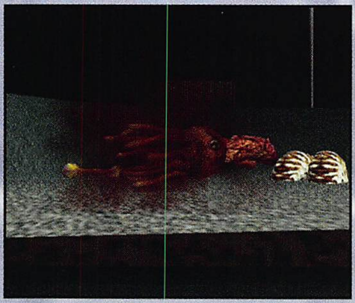
With a sequel underway and an American version planned (you know the name's gotta change), *Seaman* looks like a solid bet to stir the minds of Otaku everywhere (and become Shidoshi's next 'girlfriend'). **6**

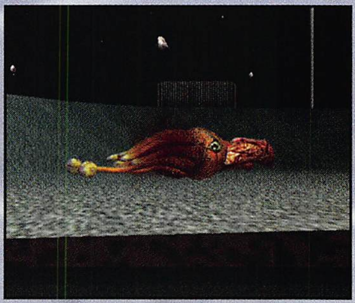
How to raise your SEAMAN



So you've bought SEAMAN, and wanna know how to raise him do ya? Well, let's start off by setting the HEAT between 15 - 20. Then, adjust the AIR in the tank so it stays approximately above 80. Now just sit back, and watch the little egg morph into um..well... little eyeballs with suckers on them.

Next, tap the glass with the R Button and coax them toward the conch shell in the middle of the tank. With some luck, you'll find that whatever lies within the shell gulping down the little guys for dinner. When it gets to about the fourth or sixth one, it will soon realize that it has made a grave mistake...

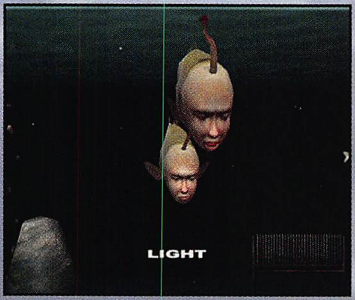






At this point, it is not necessary to give them food. They will feed off of each other until the few that are strong remain. It will be better to save the food for when they mature into something a bit larger...

Eventually, the little SEAMAN will try and communicate by blabbing some gibberish. The only words they will understand are "Ooi~," and "Seaman." This can be done by holding the A Button and speaking into the microphone. Make sure you get their attention by tapping on the glass, and then waiting for the "!" to come up, then "?" on the VMU to make contact. This is a vital keypoint.





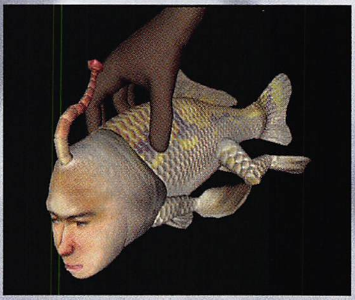


With patience and good nuturing, the Seaman will grow. You will eventually unlock another tank with small insect eggs. Keep spraying the tank with water, and keep an eye on those caterpillars. These wil become food for the Seaman when you start to run out of food for them.

The only problem with raising a Seaman, is that you will have to basically know how to speak and understand Japanese to communicate with them. Oh well <sigh>

But if you want to find out more about the rich history of Seaman, go to your local library and hunt down some material on the famous french scientist 'Jean Paul Gassee'.

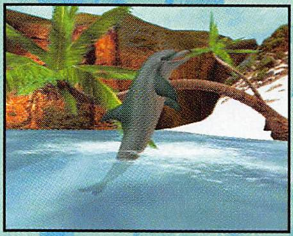





GAMEFAN
ONLINE
The only true enthusiast 'site

EUROPA

Preview



Welcome to the all-new Europa! It's been out-of-action for some time, but now it's back with a vengeance to bring you the latest goings-on across the 'pond.' This is all brought to you courtesy of Riot, our new Eurpean correspondent who'll be scouring the bowels of Europe's most popular (and most obscure) teams to bring you the latest and hottest info that some of the worlds best developers are working on. Without further ado, welcome to the world's first hands-on playtest of Appaloosa/Sega's Ecco the Dolphin: Defender of the Future.





Yep, your eyes aren't deceiving you... Europa is back and better than ever. Avid readers know that *Ecco The Dolphin: Defender of the Future* was one of our Top Ten games of E3. Ever in pursuit of the story, GameFan traveled all the way to the hot and humid lands of Budapest, Hungary to visit developers at Appaloosa, who are currently readying what will be one of the Dreamcast's finest hours. What follows is the most in-depth info you'll ever read on Sega's latest character revival—**straight from the development team**—unlike the other coverage you might have read so far.

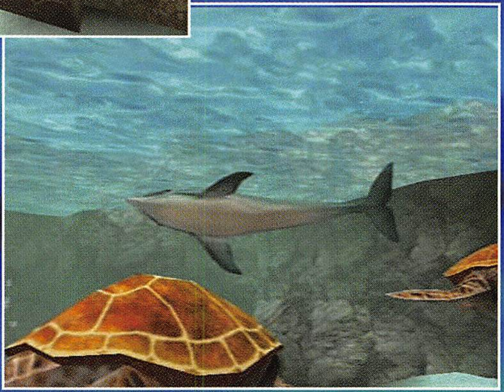


One of the only other successful franchises Sega has had, besides Sonic, is *Ecco The Dolphin*. Ecco's last appearance was on the MegaCD, so it's about time the friendly dolphin hits the seven seas again. Sega has been smart enough to get the original developers, Appaloosa Interactive, to come up with a new outing for Ecco on the Dreamcast, albeit without creator/designer Ed Anunziata who is currently resurrecting *Chakan The Forever Man* and raising a chicken named Mort.

Appaloosa and Sega are keeping the details of the story a secret so even though we know it, we cannot give away all the details... However, we can shed some light on the plot. Appaloosa is working closely with Nebula Award winning sci-fi writer David Brin, who has devised a strong back-story to complement the game. All we can reveal is that there's time travel involved and some seriously bad-ass dolphins...

Now as you no doubt know, GameFan is very pro-2D, and the Genesis *Ecco The Dolphin* games were the pinnacle of 2D gaming back in the 16-bit days. But as time passes, the 3D invasion continues, much to our dismay; however when 3D looks this good, we accept it. Gamers shall witness the true power of the Dreamcast with the arrival of this game.

Naturally the game takes place in different ocean locales where Ecco does his adventuring. The underwa-





ter environments are spectacular and littered with detail. One of the artists at Appaloosa is an avid scuba diver, and she has (yes, she) drawn hundreds of beautiful sketches of various fish, underwater plant life, and environments that the rest of the art team are incorporating into the game under her supervision.

The game starts in Paradise Island, a lush tropical island inhabited by beautiful underwater creatures. As the the plot develops, the player visits several other, fantasy worlds each having its own unique look, and what an awesome look it is.

Now I haven't done much scuba-diving, but I've seen plenty of Jacques Cousteau's programs, and *Ecco*'s worlds look just as stunningly rich and captivating as anything the Frenchman has on tape. You've got beautifully rich and original textures full of intricate detail, and Appaloosa is putting as much variety in the levels as they can. So just swimming around looking at the large levels is an experience in itself. There's a great amount of variety in the designs of these worlds, as two separate teams are working on them. The farther you get in the game, the darker and less organic the environments get, reflecting the effects of the evil forces.



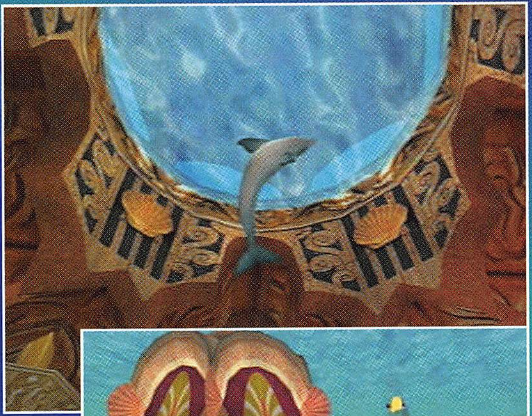




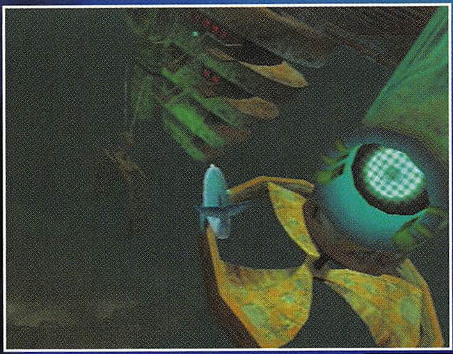


Going from 2D to go-anywhere-you-want 3D has caused a few headaches for the level designers, as they can no longer use a strategically placed pile of rocks to block access to certain areas since Ecco can simply swim around it, unlike in a 2D world. The last thing the designers want to do is ruin the feel of the game with sloppy level design, thus a lot of time and care is being devoted to the layout of the various levels. Appaloosa has a custom in-house Game World Builder™ running on the PC that's used to create the levels. The finished articles are then transferred to the Dreamcast development environment, where a little touch-up is done. One of the near-finished levels that I got to play contained a network of underwater caves that led into an ethereal-looking temple. All the while, some beautiful lighting effects reflected off of Ecco and the surroundings. I spent a good 10 minutes just taking in the awe-inspiring architecture and design... blissfully relaxing. Ecco also has real-time calculated shadows, not faked environment maps!









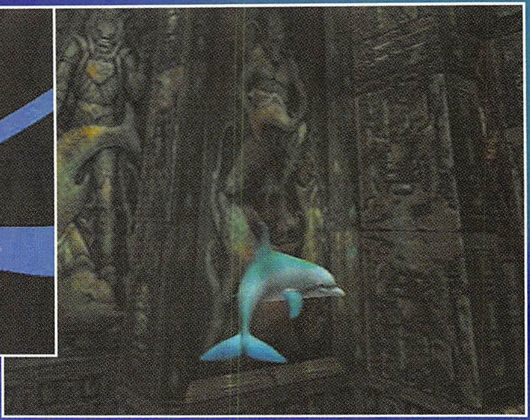
CO
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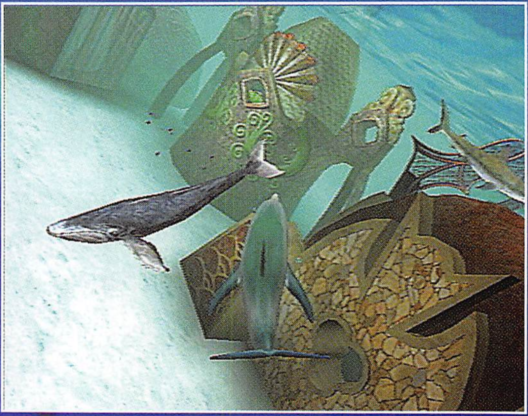
The detail doesn't end with the levels themselves, as the various underwater denizens have a lot of personality and superb animation. In fact, the developers are toying with the idea of having a remote camera angle so you can move around with Ecco and just drool over his smooth movements. Since the game has a 3rd person perspective, you spend most of the time looking at Ecco's backside. Because Appaloosa has dedicated so much time to the animation, Ecco will be meeting a lot of other friendly (and not so friendly) mammals whom sport some incredible animation themselves. It is possible to manipulate the camera in the 3rd person with the joypad's shoulder buttons, and you can even flip the camera upside down.

Despite the incredible level of detail, Ecco will run at a constant 30 frames per second, even when there's plenty of action onscreen. Appaloosa's in-house-developed 3D engine is certainly up there with the best of them when it comes to real-time lighting, shadows, and skeletal animation. Where several others have failed in bringing a 2D series to a 3D world, Appaloosa looks likely to succeed. Ecco is totally about the immersive (Reub's note: "submersive?") experience.

As usual, Ecco's main tool is his trusty sonar which is used to communicate with other underwater residents and trigger buttons, rocks etc. Sometimes Ecco will bump into creatures that won't communicate with him until a new "Sonar Song" has been learned. There are several creatures in the game that teach Ecco these songs, which enable the player to communicate with an even wider variety of creatures. There will also be various power-ups available, like the one which gives Ecco the ability to swim against strong currents. Since there's no time limit in the game, it's possible to just swim around and play with Ecco—it's a lot of fun just jumping out of the water and busting huge flips with the speedy dolphin.







Advancing from one world to another is done through exploration and meeting friendly mammals who offer help and often give tasks (or hints) to the player. These missions range from rescuing kidnapped dolphins and leading them to safety, to fending off nasty sharks with Ecco's charging weapon, to a clever sequence where a bulldozer must be operated to solve a simple block puzzle. The designers are really trying to avoid the find-the-key-to-unlock-the-door type puzzles that get old so fast.

Another design feature which Appaloosa is trying to implement is not having to re-play certain events every time you run out of oxygen (there's an oxygen meter that has to be filled from time to time by returning to the surface). So let's say you've just talked to this big whale who helps you to pass through a door. After talking to the whale you are so happy about solving the puzzle that you forget to surface for air and run out of oxygen while travelling through the gateway. But when you die and come back to the game, you don't have to talk to the whale if you don't want to; you can proceed straight through the open door and attempt it again. While this isn't the best example, it just goes to show the effort that the designers are putting into making the gameplay as convenient as possible.

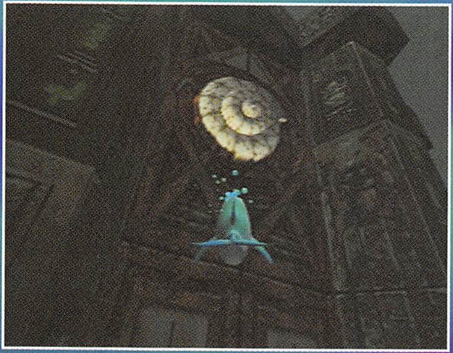
There are over 30 different environments in the game, most of which are all interconnected so it's possible to go back to an area that's already been explored. You can also enter previously inaccessible areas with skills learned later in the game.

Besides the fully 3D levels in which most of the game takes place, Appaloosa is also including a few side-scrolling affairs (still using polys, of course) which are reminiscent of the Genesis *Ecco* games. There's even a few mini-games at certain points. For example, in the first level a mad dolphin won't let you pass onto a new area until you beat him in a certain mini-game. This mini-game is mainly designed to get the player accustomed to the controls, which the developers have worked long hours perfecting. Since the game takes place in water you have full freedom of movement (not just up and down, but up/left, down/left, etc.), and the play mechanics reflect this.

The game control is not finalized yet, but already the unfinished analog control works great with the Dreamcast pad. Gracefully guiding Ecco around the ocean floor is easy and fun. Battles with the more shady underwater inhabitants are frantic and exciting, just as they should be. But make no mistake, adventure and exploration are the keys here—this is certainly more of a thinking man's game.

One of the as yet unfinished aspects of *Ecco* is the music, which is being written by old-school maestro Tim Follin who has been strangely quiet in the past years. Considering the high quality of the previous *Ecco* soundtracks (remember Spencer Nielsen's classic sounds on *Ecco CD*?), he certainly has his work cut out for him. Expect some very ambient sounds emerging from your Dreamcast.

Few games as peaceful and colorful as Dreamcast *Ecco* have gotten us as excited as this. We are expecting great things from Appaloosa come early 2000 when *Defending the Future* will be in our hands...

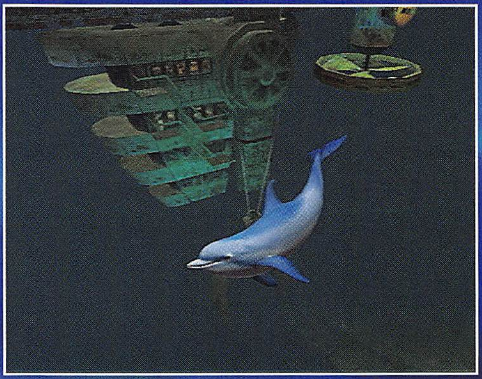






RIOT: HE'S FASTER THAN LIGHTNING!	DEVELOPER - APPALOOSA	1 PLAYER
	PUBLISHER - SEGA	AVAILABLE 1ST QTR. 2000







GameFan sat down with Tassonyi Kadocsa, one of the development managers of Ecco the Dolphin, to discuss all things about Ecco and of course the Dreamcast.

GF: Has the switch from 2D to 3D gameplay been difficult?
TK: Yes. First of all the control interface caused problems as you can now go in every direction. For most of the time the game is viewed from a 3rd person perspective; you can swim anywhere you want, so we've had to give Ecco flight sim-style controls to accommodate the complete freedom of movement. The gameplay is not like a flight sim of course; it is an action/adventure.

GF: What about the gameplay... will there be more puzzles and less action?
TK: We are definitely going for action/adventure. Basically the game tries to cater to all gamers, not just the hardcore gamers. So for that reason, [the] first level will be quite simple, with easy puzzles and there are some sub-games that familiarize the player with Ecco's movement and inertia. Later levels will of course introduce more difficult play mechanics and more complex puzzles.

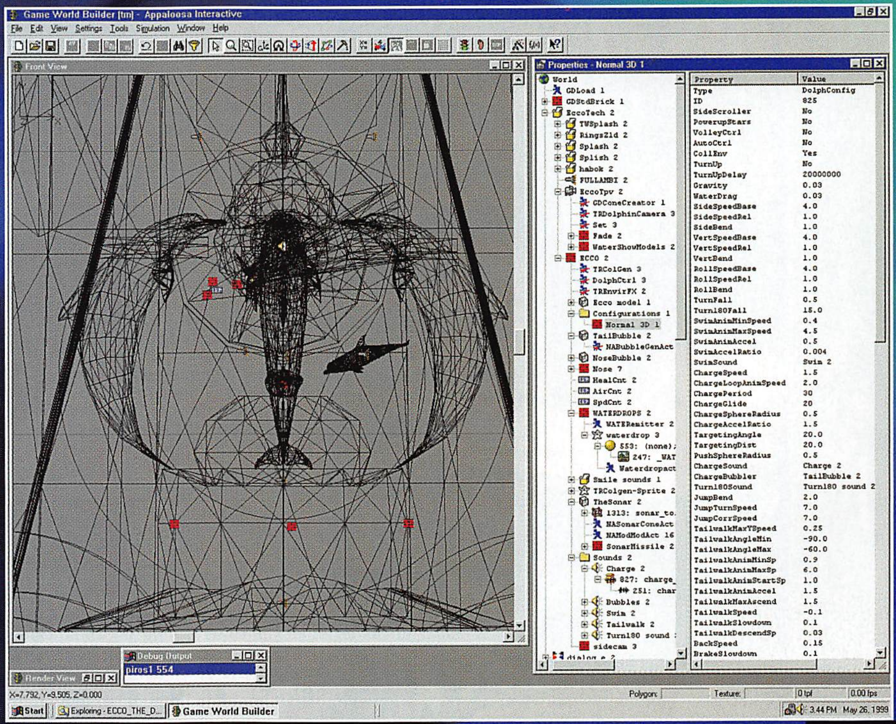
GF: What about the camera?
TK: You'll find two different, main cameras in the game. The first one is the 3rd person perspective which tries to show what Ecco sees. This is best for navigation and aiming, but you cannot see Ecco that well in this perspective, and it's easier to lose sight of the enemy. Of course this is a problem in this type of view always... but we have the solutions. We also have a remote, cinematic style camera angle, which is currently work-in-progress so it's going to change...

GF: What sort of material did you use for research purposes?
TK: Tons of material... books, videos, photos... And as you know, we have a diver on the team who has produced tons of art. We want it to be a beautiful experience for the players, just like diving is in real life.

GF: The dolphin's (and the rest of the creatures for that matter) movement is beautiful... Was it difficult to get right?
TK: It definitely took a lot of work. Ecco has a LOT of animation and the animation is really, really smooth as you saw here. Our animation system allows a lot of flexibility in terms of smoothly combining various animations.

GF: How much replay value will there be after the game has been completed?
TK: Replay value is very important for us. We are putting hidden sections into the levels that you can come back and search for and a few other things we don't want to reveal yet.

GF: Appaloosa has been working on the Dreamcast from the beginning, how has the development environment been?
TK: The Dreamcast pushes plenty of polygons—graphics technology is good and allows a lot of special effects to be used. There's enough power to use skeletal animation, frankly something I think all new games should have by now. All in all, very promising.



GameFan Sports

September; a time for football, and we got a lot of football games to cover. The gridiron wars are finished, for the year and for the first time it appears that we have no clear winners. Any one of the four sims available, pro or college, is a solid buy. *NCAA GameBreakers* gets the award for Most Improved, having gone from one of the most painful football experiences a person can have to being a really fun game. This is no cop-out either, although I know I will get mail from both the *GameDay* and *Madden* disciples declaring that their game is the best; whatever. All I know is if you love football, there is a sure winner on the shelves for you, this year. So don't worry about whether the lady in your life (whether it be your girlfriend, wife or mom) goes out and buys you the "wrong" crummy sim. Everyone comes out a winner in '99.

Six pages clearly wasn't enough to properly cover this month's games. The fact that *NFL 2K* only got a half page is disturbing, but do you really need me to allocate a spread to convince you that it is one of the great sports video games ever? I hope not. Visual Concepts has done the Dreamcast proud.

I recently went to the Skip Barber Racing School, courtesy of Infogrames (the makers of the *Test Drive* series). Got a chance to drive some Indy Light cars and a Viper. Let me tell you, there is nothing quite like getting a chance to let out a Viper on a race track. That is *way* more muscle than I ever need in a car... We also got to ride with pro drivers while they raced each other on the Laguna Seca track. Man, those guys have skills! We were barreling around hairpin turns at like 80 mph and the whole time these guys were like six inches off each other's bumper. Now that's excitement!

—*El Niño*



While I still prefer to play *Madden*, that does not detract from the fact that this is a stellar game. A leap ahead of last year's sub-par performance, *GameDay 2000* does so much right and very little wrong. I gotta say, this year it is a complete toss-up between it and *Madden*.

G 9 · C 8 · P 8 · M 7 · O 7 · **89**



NFL GameDay 2000 — PlayStation — 989 Sports

The one and only Dango is here and as a fan of gridiron gameplay, I tried to like *GameDay 2000*. It controls about the same as its previous versions, but the game looks worse, and the play editor is very limited. And after *NFL 2K*, nothing else is quite as tasty.

G 7 · C 7 · P 7 · M 6 · O 6 · **82**

A return to form for the PS version and another step forward for the N64 version. Both of these titles feature some beautiful graphics, superb control and plenty of stats and features. Whether you own a PS or a N64 you'll be getting an excellent football sim.

G 10 · C 8 · P 8 · M 7 · O 7 · **90**



Madden 2000 — PlayStation/Nintendo 64 — EA Sports

Even in light of the unbridled force that is *NFL2K: The Dawning of a New Age*, *Madden 2K* can still hold its own. While clearly looking old, the game plays as well as it ever has, and is the best football game on the PS. Now, about *Madden 2001* on DC.

G 7 · C 8 · P 8 · M 5 · O 6 · **84**

No, those aren't typos, that's 99 out of 100. Simply the best at everything, *NFL 2K* may be the best reason to own the Dreamcast. I can't think of one game which exemplifies more what a sports game should be. I'll never look at sports video games the same way again.

G 10 · C 9 · P 10 · M 9 · O 9 · **99**



NFL 2K — Dreamcast — Sega Sports

Forget the phenomenal, heart-stopping graphics—this is the best playing football game of all time. Methinks EA made a big mistake in letting VC go some years back, and now it's gonna come back to haunt them. This is the new standard bearer.

G 10 · C 9 · P 9 · M 7 · O 10 · **97**

Most improved, indeed. This game was horrible last year! This year is a complete turn-around. The running and passing games have been fixed, as has the blocking and front line problem. The inclusion of a franchise mode adds much needed depth as well.

G 8 · C 8 · P 8 · M 7 · O 7 · **88**



NCAA GameBreaker 2000 — PlayStation — 989 Sports

I've always liked college football more than professional football because there's so much more spirit and pride on each team. *GameBreaker 2000* is college football; an enormous roster, legendary teams, and it looks better than *GameDay*! Fight On!

G 8 · C 8 · P 8 · M 7 · O 7 · **85**

It's *Blitz*, so what do you want me to tell you? This is as good a conversion as you could hope for on the N64. Having said this, if you are into this style of arcade sports game, you will be in gaming heaven. Much better as a multiplayer game, so make sure you have friends.

G 9 · C 8 · P 8 · M 7 · O 7 · **89**



NFL Blitz 2000 — Nintendo 64 — Midway

The N64 isn't my system of choice to play *Blitz*—or football for that matter. As far as control and playability the game is identical to the arcade unit. Of course, you're missing all the cool bells and whistles, but it's still fun. Play editing is much improved.

G 8 · C 9 · P 9 · M 6 · O 6 · **85**

With *NFL Xtreme 2* out there, some may ask why they should choose this game over the former. *Blitz* is the original arcade football game and it remains the best. A solid conversion, it still manages to outdo *Xtreme* in just about every area, making it the wisest choice.

G 8 · C 8 · P 8 · M 7 · O 7 · **88**



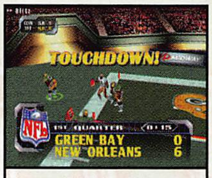
NFL Blitz 2000 — PlayStation — Midway

I prefer the graphical sharpness found in the PlayStation instead of the blur-o-vision that is N64. Occasionally the game will slow down or chunk up, but this one feels faster than the N64 version. Avoid *Xtreme 2* and pick up the real deal.

G 7 · C 9 · P 9 · M 7 · O 6 · **87**

If *Blitz* is your bread and butter, and no lesser versions will satisfy you, head out and buy a Dreamcast. *Blitz*, on DC, is arcade perfect. The frame rate, graphics sound and control are identical to the coin-op. Think of all the quarters you'll save...

G 9 · C 9 · P 9 · M 7 · O 5 · **90**



NFL Blitz 2000 — Dreamcast — Midway

Yes! Better than the arcade game that it's based upon. How's that for unbelievable? Liquid smooth animation coupled with a consistently high frame rate and high resolution graphics make *Blitz* on Dreamcast amazing to look at. You know how it plays.

G 9 · C 9 · P 9 · M 8 · O 6 · **91**

NFL GameDay 2000

PlayStation | Review

Developer: 989 Sports
Publisher: 989 Sports
Available: Now
of Players: 1-8







Much Like *Madden*, *GameDay* did little to excite last year. The gameplay seemed a bit busted, the AI was very suspect, and the improvements to the graphics and sound were minimal. It was still kinda fun to play, but it was stagnant nonetheless—and that is something you don't want to be when you're a video game franchise.

Like *Madden*, *GameDay* has managed to get its act together in time for the millenium (don't start with the whole 'the millenium isn't until 2001'). A better playing, smarter, and deeper football sim, *GameDay 2000* is worth the purchase price.



While the aforementioned improvements are major, they are few. Most of the improvements are smaller tweaks to the overall look and feel of the game. More motion capture, more tackles, and more celebration dances help bring the game to life. A nice feature, too, is the ability to opt not to celebrate after a big play and just head back to the huddle. Maybe... just maybe... the ideals of good sportsmanship and professional behavior are not completely dead.

The playbook is now twice as big (that is, over 1200 players) and the addition of team-specific playbooks means you don't have to wade through all of the useless plays you would never call with your squad. Stat heads will be pleased that stat-tracking now records 163 different categories as opposed to 122—beefy.

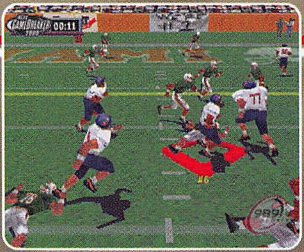
As for new features, the General Manager Mode will allow you to take your team through multiple seasons, like Dynasty Mode in *Madden*. While a little late, it's a very welcome addition and will give *GameDay* players something that *Madden* disciples have been enjoying already for a year.

If you walked away from last year's *GameDay* feeling disappointed, then this should make up for it. *GameDay 2000* has risen again! **EN**

NFL GameBreaker 2000

PlayStation | Review

Developer: Redzone
Publisher: 989 Sports
Available: Now
of Players: 1-8







Now this is a shocker. What was easily the worst football game of the last 2 years (*Jimmy Johnson* doesn't count) has made a complete turn-around. Could it possibly be that *NCAA Football* actually has competition this year for best college sim?

NCAA GameBreaker 2000 manages to make such huge strides in gameplay that it barely resembles its predecessor. Last year I would go into a tirade every time the faulty game balance would let the defense waltz in and hammer my QB. My blood would boil when I wasn't able to get a proper running game established because the blocks didn't work right. "Serenity now..."



No blood pressure problems this year. The QB actually can stand in the pocket for more than one second without being flattened. Running backs... get this... can find *and* exploit holes in the defensive line. Major improvement, folks.

GameBreaker resembles *GameDay* in most areas, from graphics to sound (Keith Jackson provides the familiar voice commentary). The new motion capture, which includes some great tackle animations, is a great addition, and the high poly count on the player models makes for a more realistic looking game.

The career mode, which resembles those in all other football titles, includes an interesting blue chip recruiting system for in-between seasons. This attention to detail and depth will give *GameBreaker* a nice boost in longevity.

NCAA GameBreaker 2000 is a strong entry in an otherwise anemic franchise. After 989 managed to retool both the AI and gameplay, football fans will no longer have to wait a few moments to calm down, before removing the controller from where it's embedded in the wall before calling the next play. Let's hope this game signals a new beginning for the faltering franchise. **EN**

Madden 2000

Review — Developer: EA Sports | Publisher: EA Sports | Available: Now | # of Players: 1-4

This game just keeps getting better. While the PlayStation version had been a bit stagnant, over the past couple of years, this *Madden* just keeps barrelling forward.

One of *Madden*'s most compelling selling points, and easily its most recognizeable, is its graphics. While *Quarterback Club* had managed to remain the best looking football sim, for a few years, *Madden 2000* is right there, now. New player models, scaled player size and more motion capture (should we really be glamorizing taunting, in sports?) make this game a real treat on the eyes.

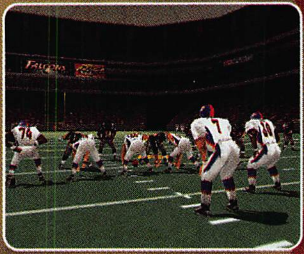
The game's strongest facet, though, becomes apparent upon playing; control. Madden 2000's gameplay is, quite simply, stellar. Both the running and passing games work well and the AI on offense and defense is at a level that had yet to be achieved on the N64. This is almost a frustration-free gaming experience. Novel, isn't it?

While sports titles can never get boring as a multi-player experience, one player contests tend to lose their luster. *Madden*'s attempt at combating that takes the form of three key features. First, and most prominent, there is the Dynasty Mode that allows you to play through multiple seasons. Developers have also added new stats especially for the Dynasty Mode that will make stat-mongers salivate.

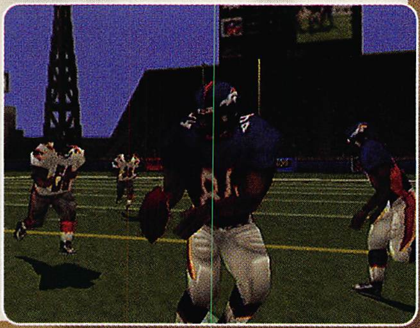
Next are the create-a-situation option and the the Madden Challenge. The former feature allows you to custom build a game situation, from the time on the clock and score, to the yards needed to go and the teams involved. The Madden Challenge is a set of pre-designed situation, much like those in Konami's ISS series. Beat the challenges and earn secret codes to unlock teams and stadiums.

Madden 2000 is a great sim that is a must have for football fans. Now if they would only start working on a Dreamcast version... **EN**









Madden 2000

Review — Developer: EA Sports | Publisher: EA Sports | Available: Now | # of Players: 1-8

Now we're talkin', people! *Madden* is back! The last two years have not been the *Madden* franchise's most impressive. While they may still have been technically good games, they didn't really excite like they used to. The AI wasn't up to snuff and the game balance seemed to be off. Actually, that can be said for most of the football sims, of late, with the exception of *NCAA Football 99* and *2000*.

The tenth year of the franchise (can you believe that!? Ten years... and I have played every one) may be one of its brightest. An infusion of great gameplay and solid AI have perfectly complimented the exemplary graphics and entertaining commentary (John and Pat may be past their times, as commentators, but they sure are funny to listen to).

The franchise mode is *Madden 2000*'s biggest selling point. Taking teams through entire dynasties is infinitely more entertaining than just one season. The stats that you compile are a joy to sift through and the satisfaction of turning a garbage team like the Colts into a powerhouse is quite satisfying.

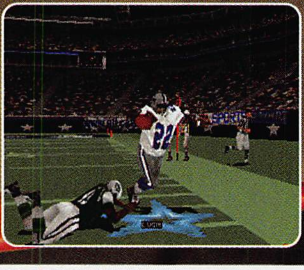
As mentioned earlier, the running and passing are near perfect, as is the defense. There is just the right amount of interceptions, fumbles and big yard plays to make this an extremely exciting and realistic football sim.

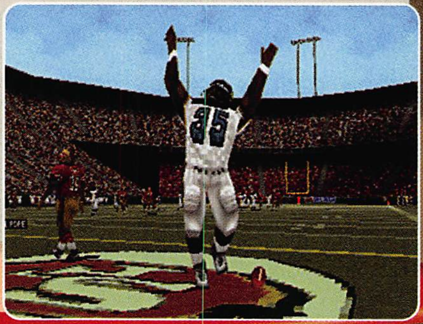
Let's talk graphics. *Madden 2000* has beautiful graphics highlighted by some fantastic motion capturing. The hits in this game are BIG. When your linebacker wraps up the running back, you can almost feel it! More contact points also allow for a wider variety of tackles to take place (oh, to watch the opposing QB get his clock cleaned is a thing of beauty!).

Madden 2000 is an invigorating football sim. I can't think of a better way to celebrate the tenth anniversary of this heralded franchise. **EN**









NFL Blitz 2000

Nintendo 64 | Review | Developer: Midway | Publisher: Midway | Available: Now | # of Players: 1-4





I said it last issue, I'll reiterate it this issue. This genre of sports game should probably go away for awhile. I think I speak for most of the gaming audience when I say that the novelty has worn off. I'd like to be able to walk away from this ilk of game having *Blitz 2000* be my parting memory.

A phenomena in the arcade, *NFL Blitz 2000* has translated quite well to the Nintendo 64. A great frame rate, high speed and some fantastic control make this the best arcade sports game on 32 or 64 bit console (we won't compare it to the god-like translation on Dreamcast).



In addition to containing all of the elements of the coin-op version, gamers will be treated to a deeper playbook and a season mode. Both are absolutely necessary in order to make the game worthwhile for the single player. It's no secret that these types of games grow old very quickly as one-player experiences.

While *Blitz 2000* doesn't have the depth of a true sim, it does have addictive gameplay. The pace of the game is frenetic and the over-the-top antic, that highlight the down time, are fairly amusing (ok, they're getting old...). You can still feel those bone-crunching hits in the pit of your stomach.

The lack of a full 11-man squad limits the strategy, but *Blitz* was meant to be a visceral pastime, not a strategic one. Since the game is more of an offensive showcase than anything else, expect to be able to score often. Good defense, however, is the sign of a truly great *Blitz* player and the satisfaction of shutting down your opponent's running and passing games are quite satisfying.

Blitz 2000 remains a very enjoyable, exciting arcade experience. If you need some intense football action and have too little patience for a sim, this is your game. **EN**

NFL Blitz 2000

PlayStation | Review | Developer: Midway | Publisher: Midway | Available: Now | # of Players: 1-4






It ain't as pretty as its N64 cousin, but it is just as fun. *Blitz 2000*, for the PlayStation remains one of the best arcade sports experiences out there. While the N64 version has no competition, PSX *Blitz 2000* has to compete with 989's *Xtreme 2*.

All of the features in this title are those that can be found in the N64 version. There is an added season mode, bigger playbooks and all of that wholesome, football barbarism, complete with devastating hits, cheap shots and helmets flying off (is there a head in that thing?). *Blitz 2000* is perfect, mindless entertainment and manages to outdo *Xtreme 2* not because it has tighter control or better graphics (they are about the same) but because *Blitz* manages to add more skill and strategy to a genre of gaming that is almost completely devoid of it. The fact that *Blitz* is a 7-on-7 contest (as opposed to a 5-on-5) makes for better gameplay. The plays you call have more variety, a 7-on-7 match brings more options to each play, and giving the quarterback those two extra blockers gives him more time to set up a play. A turbo version of the Run & Shoot offense is only fun for about... 5 minutes. After that it falls into the category of repetitive and boring.



The choice is simple, really. If you still enjoy playing this type of game, then you should be playing *Blitz 2000*. With all of the secret teams, codes and over-the-top savagery, it remains the best reason to de-evolve. I should warn you though, that this franchise is already showing age and you may not be as thrilled with the gaming experience as you were with *Blitz 99* (despite the fact that *Blitz 2000* is technically a superior game). That, however, is where the Dreamcast version comes in. Now there is a game that could revitalize the stale genre... We won't go into that right now. **EN**

NFL Blitz 2000

Dreamcast | Review

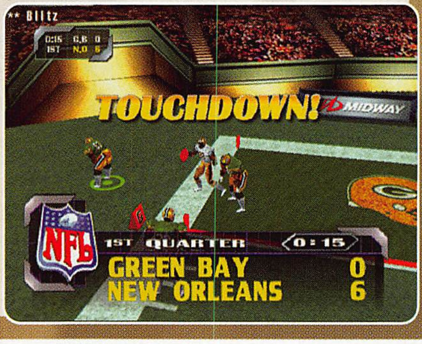
Developer: Midway | Available: Now
Publisher: Midway | # of Players: 1-4

Three *Blitz* titles in one issue! Too much, I tell you...too much. Not to say these aren't good games, but how much can I possibly say about a title you're already familiar with, and which I've already written about twice in this issue? And you thought I had a cushy job...

I do have a cushy job because getting paid to play a game like *Blitz 2000* on the Dreamcast is a slice of heaven. In the reviews of the two other versions of *Blitz*, I alluded to the possibility that this franchise, as well as the rest of arcade sports, is ready for a hiatus. While I consider this to be a gaming truism, there's no doubt that a title like this was necessary for the Dreamcast.

How good is *Blitz 2000* on the Dreamcast? It's arcade perfect, meaning that you'll derive the same amount of enjoyment from this version as the coin-op... with enough quarters left over to do your laundry. A blazing 60fps, flawless gameplay, and the addition of a season mode make this one helluva title. Sadly, the problems inherent with this style of game are present as well, from the lack of overall strategy to a total disregard for realism. But this style of game isn't for everyone; *Blitz 2000* is user record-driven, so stat-heads will be left wanting. It would've been nice to see the addition of some deeper stat-tracking for season mode and user records.

So there you have it. *NFL Blitz 2000* is a fantastic quarter cruncher which really shines on Dreamcast. While some may not be into this style of gaming, the quality makes it a worthwhile purchase for all types of gamer. I suggest picking it up along with your Dreamcast. **EN**









NFL 2K

Dreamcast | Review

Developer: Visual Concepts | Available: Sep. 9
Publisher: Sega | # of Players: 1-4

Are you kidding me? I still can't believe that this is an actual game and not some rendered intro. Graphics like this couldn't possible be from gameplay... but they are. *NFL 2K* is, without a doubt, the most impressive sports video game that I have seen, to date. Nothing else even comes close.

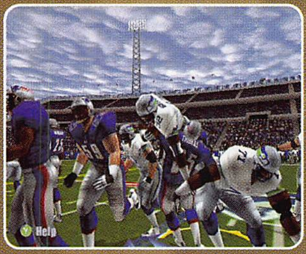
With all of the games in sports this issue, I could only allot half a page to this revolutionary title. While I could easily have filled up all eight pages with gorgeous screens and me prattling on about how great this game is, I must distill my rantings. I should hope that every male in America has a firm handle on the game of football, and video game players are plenty savvy where football sims are concerned. For this reason, I will forego telling you about all of the standard stuff that makes up the bulk of *NFL 2K*.

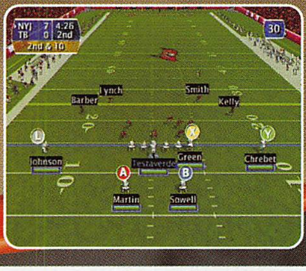
The stats, playbooks, modes and features that have been the staples of every football sim, over the last five years, are in here. This game is about taking everything we have grown accustomed to (bored with?) and making it better... much better. The graphics are the most outstanding of any game to date—and that includes Dreamcast titles. The in-game sounds and commentary are lively and entertaining (although the commentary AI has its slip-ups every so often, like all games) as are all of the TV-style cuts, making for the most immersive sports game around. The gameplay and the AI are as good as the graphics!

The VMU will be your best friend when you play multiplayer because you will be able to choose your plays on the little screen, completely shielding them from the wandering eyes of those around you. For one player, the plays will show up on screen, along with the play patterns overlaid onto the field, letting you see exactly where your men will be for the play. *NFL 2K* will also include All-Pro teams, classic squads and 5 alumni teams, in addition to the standard 31 (the Cleveland Browns are back!).

NFL 2K is worth the purchase of the machine, itself. If you love to play sports games, then this title should be your Holy Grail. And to think, we still haven't gotten the reviewable basketball or hockey... **EN**

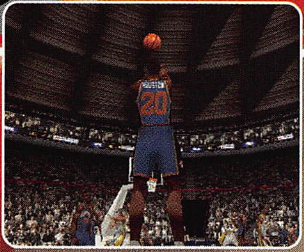




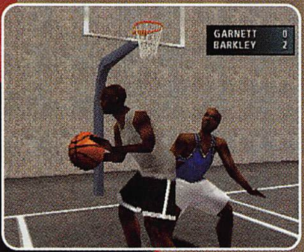


NBA Live 2000

Preview
Developer: NuFX
Publisher: EA Sports
Available: Fall
of Players: 1-8







While it isn't celebrating its 10th anniversary, like *Madden*, *Live* still has managed to give gamers five great years of basketball (o.k., so 1996 was not a good year, but we forgive you). *NBA Live 2000* continues the string of excellent basketball sims, offering the the type of great commentary, top-notch graphics and innovative gameplay that keeps us coming back.

Don't expect the game to look much better than last year, because you may be disappointed. More facial animations and motion capture liven up the game, but no new level of excellence has been achieved. I would venture a guess that we saw them push the 32-bit envelope as far as they are going to be able to, last year.



So what are they doing to make this a worthwhile purchase? It's all in the features and presentation. To make the experience more like that seen on TV, more camera angles have been added and TV-style cut scenes have been implemented—much like in *NHL 99*. Also, the commentary is provided by Reggie Theus and Poier, two recognizeable voices from the NBA.

Live 2000 will feature fully customizeable teams, 5 All-Star squads, featuring the sixty greatest players all time, and the ability to put these greats on current team rosters.

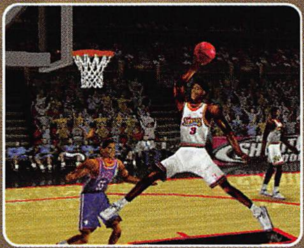
A black-top practice mode has also been included and little extras like year-to-year changing player atributes, in Dynasty Mode, make *Live 2000* a much more enjoyable experience.

All of this is on top of the standard fare that has always been mainstays of *Live*, from great AI, icon passing and a superb create-a-player feature. *Live 2000* could be the best basketball game to date. **EN**

NBA ShootOut 2000

Preview
Developer: 989 Sports
Publisher: 989 Sports
Available: Nov.
of Players: 1-8





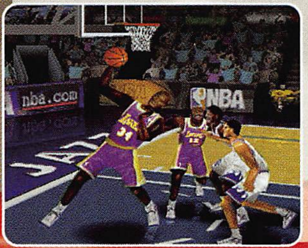


The last couple of years we have seen 989 Sports begin to wane. Sure, their products were selling like hotcakes, but that didn't make the games very good. *GameDay*, *GameBreaker*, *ShootOut*, and *FaceOff* all took steps backward. This year, we have already seen both *GameDay* and *GameBreaker* come roaring back, and this makes me feel optimistic for the upcoming release of *NBA ShootOut 2000*.

Overhaul is the only word I can think of. 989 has started by implementing a whole new engine to power its basketball sim. The graphics, sound, and gameplay will all be amped up to try and deliver a more feverishly-paced hoops title.

You'll recognize most of the features and key ingredients in *ShootOut 2000*, plus there will be some innovative (yes, I am using the word "innovative" in association with a sports franchise) additions. Create-A-Dunk—does this sound as cool to you as it does to me? When you create a player, now you can customize the type of dunking style he will possess. You're probably saying to yourself, 'Wow, that's incredible! I'll buy the game just for that!' But there's more. You can also switch dribbling styles on the fly and take even more control of a player's shooting accuracy using a new Touch Shooting option.

'Whoa, all this for just regular price? You're not serious!'



ShootOut 2000 isn't done yet. There will also be team-specific playbooks you can design with an edit-playbook option. Also, new animated crowds add to the excitement and ambiance of a real basketball game! Lastly, at the end of a season, there will be awards ceremonies handing out all of the real NBA trophies for such accomplishments as Defensive Player of the Year, MVP, Scoring Leader, and Rookie of the Year—just like the most recent versions of *NHL*.

NBA ShootOut 2000 looks like it may be the most aggressive sports game of the winter months, incorporating new features, innovative gameplay, and a brand new engine. If the improvements in *GameDay* and *GameBreaker* are any indication, then *ShootOut* could topple *Live* as the hoop sim of the year! **EN**

QUARTER CRUNCHERS

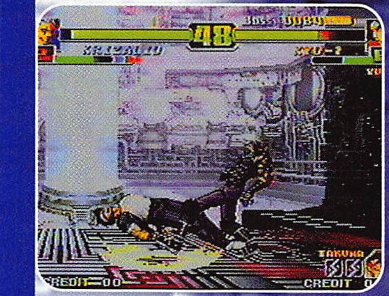
"...yes, it is still running on the good old Neo-Geo arcade hardware..."

KING OF FIGHTERS 99 MILLENIUM





I know what you're thinking... "Another *KoF*." Yes, it is another *King of Fighters* game and yes, it is still running on the good old Neo-Geo arcade hardware which has outlasted time itself. If you're looking for some drastic graphical enhancements, you won't get any from *KoF '99: MB*. While there are new backgrounds, menu interface changes,















and redrawn special effects, there's nothing here that hasn't been seen before. Returning characters, for the most part, look identical to *KoF '98*, with added frames of animation for new moves.

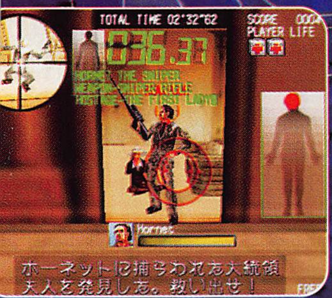
As for the four brand new characters, K has a basic assortment of Ryo-like moves, plus a teleport slide similar to Athena's. Maxima is a lethal combination of Goro and Heavy-D. Bao has fireballs galore, reminding me of Cheng Shinzan from *Fatal Fury*. And Whip (my favorite of the new guys) uses a somewhat pixelated whip and has some amazingly fluid animation. Her Strength Shot attack (half circle back + A or C) is one of the coolest attacks in the game. Sure there are the two semi-new characters, Xiang Fei (from *Real Bout Fatal Fury 2*) and Jhun Hoon (essentially a Kim Kaphwan rip-off), but the real changes in *KoF '99: MB* are the gameplay.

One of the most noticeable is the selection of a fourth character. While it's still a battle of 3-on-3, whoever isn't selected among the first three becomes the striker. During battle, pressing B and C together will bring your striker out. Similar to *Marvel Vs. Capcom*, the striker will assist you either offensively or defensively. For example, if Terry Bogard is your striker, he'll come out and hit the opponent with a combo ending in a Power Wave. If your striker is Xiang Fei, she'll come out and stick out her tongue at the opponent, lowering his Special Meter.

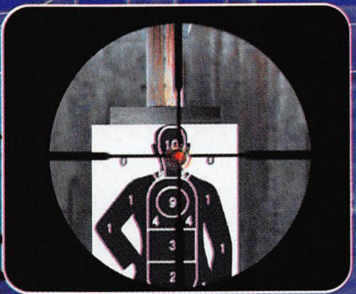
Speaking of which, the special meter has been remodeled. First off, you won't be able to select Extra mode. Plus, the Super Meter charges every time you attack an opponent or use a special move (i.e. Advanced Mode). Pressing A, B, and C simultaneously when your meter is full puts you in Counter mode, in which you can perform Super Moves at any time, as well as cancel Special Moves into Super Moves... for a limited time, of course. Or if your Super Meter is full, you can opt to press B, C, and D together to enter Armor Mode. As the name suggest, this mode gives you great defensive abilities that include taking less damage from blows (no 'tick damage' at all) and not reeling when hit. The drawback to Armor Mode is you can't do Super Moves.

So, what you've got here is the same old goodness of *King of Fighters*, revamped with a new gameplay system that'll be scrutinized closely by hard-core *KoF* veterans. And if the Dreamcast can do *KOF '99 Dream Match*, how far can a translation of *KoF '99: Millennium Battle* be? Until then, if you're a fan of 2D fighting games, it's worth checking out, and if you're a *KoF* fan, head out to an arcade now! ***Dangohead***

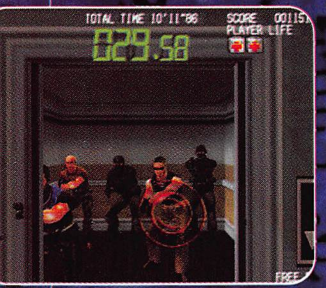
"Seeing is Believing" SILENT SCOPE

















Arcade gun games are pretty much the same everywhere. Plop in your change, press the start button, take the gun in hand, and hit that trigger as fast as you can (never minding that you'll probably develop arthritis by age 30). While some have had cool gimmicks (e.g. the foot pedal in *Time Crisis*), they're still just simple games in which you look, aim, and fire. Konami's newest arcade gun game, *Silent Scope*, is about to change all that, and trust me, Senator Lieberman will have conniptions when he hears about this one.

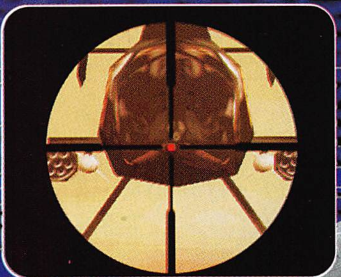
The President has been kidnapped by terrorists and it's your job to save him. Being an expert sniper, it's your job to take down terrorists in a variety of urban locations including skyscrapers, highways, and even a football field! Solely a single player game ("I work alone..."), *Silent Scope's* most unique feature is the two screens you have to play with. The main monitor displays the overall area you're covering, with all the targets a couple hundred yards away. But how do you hit targets that far back? Well, that's where the scope on the rifle comes into play. The second screen is fitted inside your scope and it magnifies the area you're looking at. With this scope screen you're able to aim much better. If a target runs away on your scope screen, an arrow will flash indicating which direction it went. However, even with this helpful arrow, you'll still need to use both screens: the main screen to see the overall area, and the scope screen for pinpoint accuracy.

Three play modes are available: Time Attack, Story Mode, and Target Practice. Time Attack challenges you to complete a level in the fastest time with the highest accuracy. Story Mode develops the plot of rescuing the President, and Target Practice lets you practice some very difficult shooting exercises at a firing range. Gameplay requires fast reflexes and quick thinking, as you'll be swarmed with several enemies at a time. Careful aim is needed to take out targets, and if you run out of bullets, you're in for a long wait, as re-loading a sniper rifle takes time. Also, make sure to look out for special "voyeur vision" spots; use your scope to look for babes (usually in bikinis) to earn a life-up. Nice touch, Konami!

Graphics are pretty good, but not spectacular compared to the likes of Sega's monster arcade gun games. The visuals have a semi-washed out look, and the movement of characters and vehicles seems slow. The game would definitely benefit from a high-res facelift and an increased frame rate (it's around 30 fps). But minor gripes aside, *Silent Scope* is definitely a lot of fun and innovative enough to warrant a trip to the local arcade. You'd better do it now, before the Lieberman-types get a look at this one. ***Dangohead***





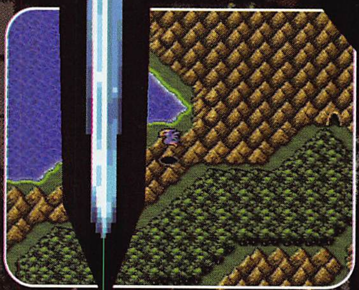














When GameFan Online was the first website to break the news about *Final Fantasy Anthology* coming Stateside (www.gamefan.com), most old school *FF* fans were overjoyed. After all, not only were we getting the two best *FF* games (no, *FFVII* and *VIII* are not among the best—deal with it), we were also going to be privy to the never-seen-outside-of-the-Internet-emulation-scene *FFV* (see the review elsewhere in this issue). Yes, things were indeed looking good for a brief moment in time... then tragedy struck—*Final Fantasy II* was to be axed from the collection (even after being included in the import version of *Final Fantasy Collection*). Die-hard *FF* fans took up torch and pitchfork, advancing on the Square EA offices in Costa Mesa, California with the grim knowledge that *FFII* **would** be included in the *Anthology* even if the loss of life at Square proved to be catastrophic. They would know our pain, our unadulterated rage at the slight of the chosen one... yep, we signed another one of those countless "Please, please, please bring this game to the States" petitions. Naturally it fell on deaf ears, <sigh>. When that didn't work, we had resident Square-head Eggo plead his case to the powers that be... but they wouldn't hear of it. The stock answer was "We'll look into it," which is loosely translated PR-speak for "Yeah right, kid—why should we bother when only ten people will miss it." Ah, but that's where they're wrong, right?

And why wasn't *FFII* included in the US *Anthology*? Sadly, because Square didn't deem it worthy enough to devote the localization teams to the project, i.e. it's a cash run. Why bother giving the gamers what they truly want when it's so much easier to effortlessly port two of them and call it a day?







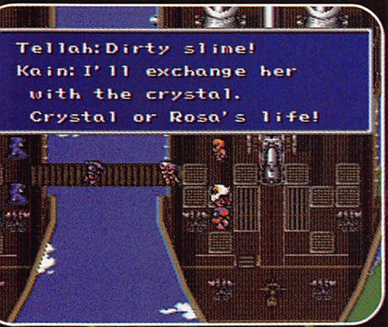












That doesn't mean, though, that we forget so soon and so easily. No! We persevere, and watch as prices for *FF2* skyrocket on Ebay, and weep heartily knowing that many, many people will never know what Square's finest *FF* hour was. No, they'll simply go on believing that *Final Fantasy VII* is the ultimate 'RPG,' with it's 'cinematic presentation' and all those other nonsense buzz words that go along with that non-starter.





So what made *FFII* so much better than *FFIII* and *FFVII*? It's quite simple, really. *Final Fantasy 2* featured the most coherent plot and storyline of any in the series. *FFV* was bogged down in the jobs system that would later find its way into *FFVII*, and *FFIII* simply meandered to and fro with a small army of characters such that none was developed to their fullest possible extent. By the time *FF2* came to a close, you'd felt as if you'd journeyed with great friends for a period upwards of 40 hours. The experience wasn't unlike reading a fantastic novel, that you were actually saddened with when it finally came to a close. One of the key moments <minor spoiler ahead> witnessed the transformation of Polom and Porom into stone statues to save the party. I have yet to meet a single person that recalls that sequence and wasn't saddened nearly to tears at their apparent death. That's the kind of connection RPGs *should* strive to cultivate in any example of the genre, and it happens so little these days that it's enough to make this adventurer of a thousand quests that much more sad, and not a little bitter.



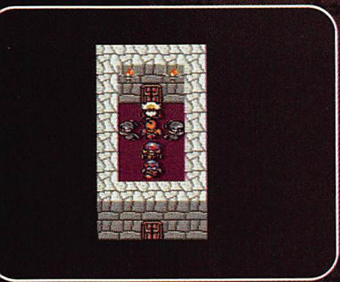
"...I'll simply fire up the ol' SNES one more time; plug in my much-worn copy of Final Fantasy II; and embark upon what is among the finest traditional RPGs ever, all the while puzzling..."





When it comes right down to it, this is simply a larger reminder that the Square many of us grew up with is no more (along with a lot of other companies, now that video games have gone so far into the mainstream), replaced by a vision that is for the mighty dollar and no longer truly for the gamer. Cherish those memories, kids, the future is looking bleaker by the second.

So while the rest of the world revels in *FFIII (VI)* and *FFV*, I'll simply fire up the ol' SNES one more time; plug in my much-worn copy of *Final Fantasy II*; and embark upon what is among the finest traditional RPGs **ever**, all the while puzzling what it was that made Square EA spurn us in our darkest hour...although we'll never really know. **ECM**











AnimeFan

Anime, Manga, J-pop, Asian Live Action, Otaku Culture

A Note from Shidoshi...

Last night, I experienced one of the most epic events of my young life—the debut of Chris Jericho on Monday Night Raw. I knew he was coming, I was ready and waiting for Raw is Jericho, but that still didn't stop me from going nuts when it actually happened. The Paragon of Virtue is finally in the WWF... life is GOOD. Beyond that, I completely loved ***The Blair Witch Project***. A lot of people have slagged off on the movie, but I thought it was brilliant, and except for my wish for a bit steadier of a camcorder, I had no complaints. I mean, that ending still haunts me to this day. Between the special edition DVD of that and ***WWF 2000*** for the N64, I'm going to go insane waiting. Oh well, enjoy this month's AnimeFan, and if I've done something wrong, I promise that I'll never, EEEEEEVER do it again. [hehe] ***- shidoshi***

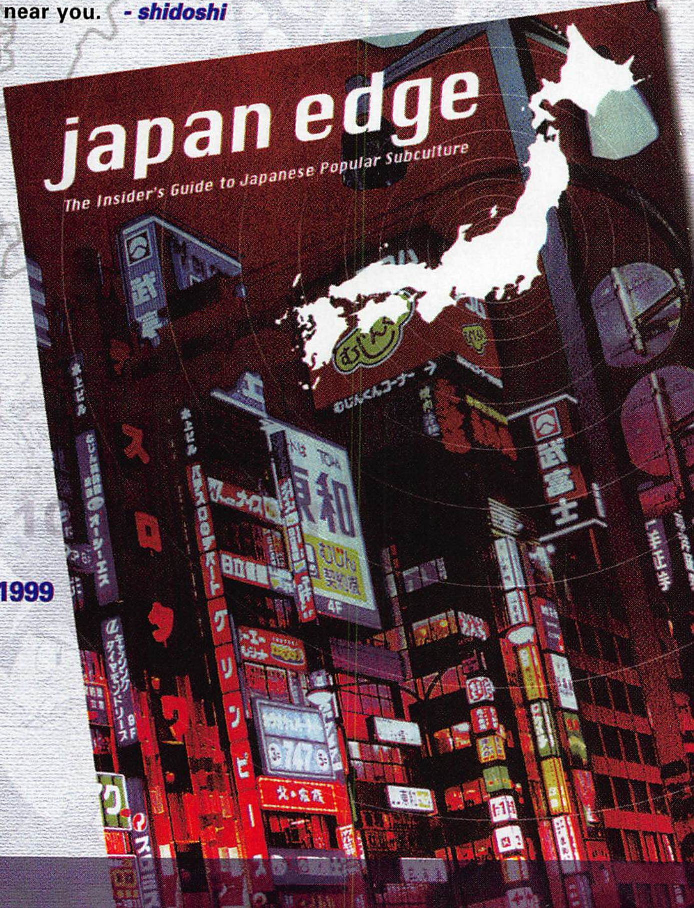
Goods Showcase

Japan Edge

Make no doubt about it, Japanese styles and culture are currently very "hip" in our happy little US social structure. Thus, it's no surprise that companies are looking to give eager English-speaking readers a chance to take a better look into Japanese culture and get a deeper understanding and appreciation for it. Enter Viz Communications and their division, Cadance Books, who recently put together and published ***Japan Edge: the Insider's Guide to Japanese Pop Subculture***. ***Japan Edge*** brings together a variety of writers who bring you their dealings and experience with a number of aspects of Japanese culture. There's Carl Gustav Horn, taking a look at the world of Japanese animation, talking about ***Speed Racer*** to ***Evangelion*** and everything in-between. Then there's Patrick Marcias who deals with the interesting and sometimes bizarre world of Japanese cinema. Or how about Matt Thron, self-proclaimed shoujo manga expert, who looks into the deeper and lesser known areas of the Japanese comic world. ***Japan Edge*** also covers Japanese music, "noise," and a variety of other topics. ***Japan Edge*** isn't something that I would begin to consider an all-inclusive reference book, and if that is what you are expecting from it you'll definitely be disappointed. Instead, it is intended as a collection of personal accounts on the different ways of life, sort of a collection of scrapbooks all dealing with Japanese culture. If you're interested in the culture aspects behind a wide variety of Japanese society - anime, film, music, manga, etc. - then I think you might find this book to be a really interesting read. The fact that most of the writers in this book are Americans writing about their delving into the different areas of fandom is a bit odd, but then again that is a factor that may make the book even more interesting to American readers. ***Japan Edge*** should be available as you read this, so check out your favorite anime/manga retailer near you. ***- shidoshi***



Pre-production pages. Final pages may differ.



Top 10



Shidoshi's Top 10 for August 1999

1: ***Kite*** [anime]
2: ***Dog of Flanders*** [anime]
3: ***Cowboy BeBop*** [anime]
4: ***Oh My Goddess!*** [manga]
5: ***Bubblegum Crisis 2040*** [anime]
6: ***Video Girl Ai*** [anime]
7: ***Elf Princess Rane*** [anime]
8: ***Weather Woman*** [live-action]
9: ***Fushigi Yugi*** [anime]
10: ***Maison Ikkoku*** [anime]

Manga Scene

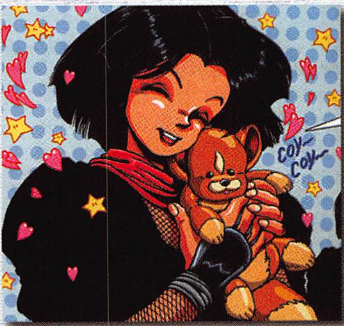
MangaZine

Antarctic Press recently revived their publication MangaZine - after a three year hiatus - with a new look, feel, and angle. MangaZine now joins the ranks of the "American Manga Anthology" market, bringing you a variety of "US Manga" titles each month. In Issue 1, we find the start to four titles - ***Ninja High School***, ***Gold Digger***, ***World War II: 1946***, and ***Warrior Nun Areala***, all in color. Now, I'm not a follower of Antarctic Press titles, so I'm not sure how these versions tie in to the older versions. Anyhow, along with the four titles you get, MangaZine also contains looks at upcoming Antarctic Press titles, news and articles, a look into the world of being a manga artist, and reviews of a few anime titles. For Antarctic Press fans out there, this will probably be a must-have title on your shopping list each month. For the typical manga fan, this might not be your thing, especially for $9 an issue. So, if the relaunch of MangaZine sounds interesting to you, give it a look the next time you're at your local comic shop. ***- shidoshi***









Guide to Ratings Codes

We'll use this example:

Sub | Dub
VHS | LD | DVD

Black: The title is available in that format / language. So, for our example, the title is out in both Sub and Dub on VHS.

Underlined: The version being reviewed. So, we're reviewing the VHS Sub version.

Greyed: Not available. So, our title isn't out on LD.

Blue: Coming soon / planned. Our example title is planned for release on DVD.

Send comments, letters, artwork to:

AnimeFan
6301 DeSoto Avenue
Unit #E
Woodland Hills, CA 91367

Or :
shidoshi@gamefan.com

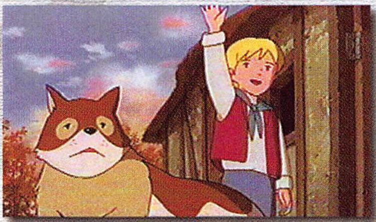
Anime Drive-In

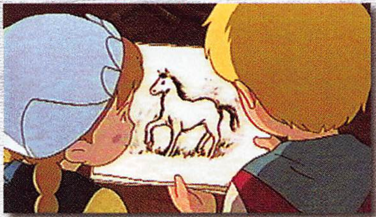
the Dog of Flanders

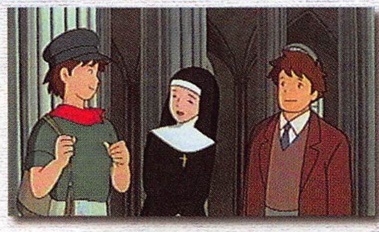
AF Best of the Issue!

Drama • Movie • Pioneer • 3+
104 min • Sub | Dub • VHS | LD | DVD

A







Anime can be a lot of things - action, adventure, horror, adult, suspense, the list goes on and on. But then there are those special titles, ones without any sex, violence, robots, big explosions, and you either welcome them with open arms as shining examples of what anime can be at it's best, or you shrug it off as a waste of your time for not being "exciting" enough. If you're in the latter category, I'll tell you now - you might as well stop reading this review, because ***The Dog of Flanders*** is exactly that. The story if a simple, innocent one: the tale of a young Belgian boy, Nello, and his beloved dog Patrasche. Though still young, Nello's life isn't easy, and he must deal with a number of factors in his life which will either make him stronger or will break his spirits for good. The beauty of this movie is almost indescribable - ***DoF*** reminds me a lot of Miyazaki's classics, with a richness and emotion and majesty to it that ranks up there with titles like ***Kiki's Delivery Service*** and ***My Neighbor Totoro***. While the movie IS suitable for all ages, but not all ages may be suitable for it. What do I mean? Well, the movie deals with a number of serious topics - death, sadness, animal abuse - and really young children may not completely understand what's going on, or may get scared at some of the things that they see. I absolutely recommend this for everyone out there, as it's such a beautiful and touching story. I'd just, personally, recommend that if a very young viewer will be watching for the first time, that you watch it with them to answer any questions they may have. With that said, I can't possibly recommend this anime title enough. Need something to renew your faith in anime, something to prove that it isn't just about demons and buxom girls and big guns? If so, or if you're simply looking for a wonderful movie to enjoy, then do yourself a favor and pick up a copy of ***The Dog of Flanders***. ***- shidoshi***

Anime Drive-In

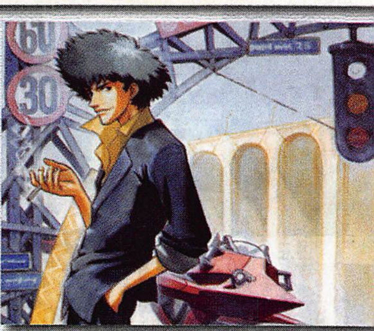
Cowboy BeBop: Volume 1

Adventure • TV (2 eps.) • Bandai • 15+
60 min • Sub | Dub • VHS | LD | DVD

A-







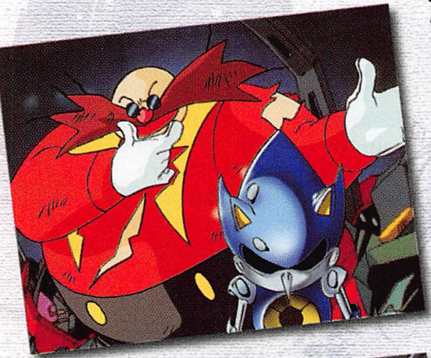
Cowboy BeBop - you can't help but have heard about it, you can't help but wonder what such an anime would be about, and you can't help but want to see it and find out what it's about. So I popped the tape into my VCR, sat on my couch, and prepared to have my curiosity finally quelled. After a few moments, I was treated to an extremely trippy intro, one such as you might find leading into a 60's/70's detective drama.. very cool. So, groovy intro, but what about the anime itself? I found myself watching a show that was a combination of the traditional cowboy hero, riding in on his mechanical horse, in a world that is a mix of 70's cop show and New York jazz club. A odd mix, no doubt about it, but just how well it works and gels together is nothing short of amazing. We find ourselves introduced to is Spike, a galactic bounty hunter whose picture you would find if you looked up the term "cool anime hero" - cool, laid back, yet a well trained fighter with an unquestionable hint of Lupin thrown in for good measure. He flies around with his partner in their ship, "BeBop," looking for jobs and people to bring in. It seems, however, that trouble has a tendency of finding them, instead of the other way around. The first episode completely blew me away, with great pacing, an interesting plot, awesome direction, and a fight scene that I would consider one of the best I've ever seen, even if it was really shot - the camera angles used to enhance it couldn't have been better. The second episode, unfortunately, wasn't quite as good or awe-inspiring, yet it still existed on a level higher than many other anime TV shows out there. With a mixture of awesome character designs (who have interesting personalities), art direction and animation that rival the best of them, a spectacular soundtrack, and a general "feel" that just oozes attitude and personality, everything in the mix is just right for the creation of an instant classic. There aren't any truly strong sci-fi anime titles currently making their run in the US, so ***Cowboy BeBop*** may just be the thing that fills the gap that Evangelion has left since it's finale. ***- shidoshi***

Sonic the Movie

Action • OAV • ADV Films • 7+
60 min • Sub | Dub • VHS | LD | DVD

C+

Nowadays, when you think Sega, you can't help but think Sonic, and his adventures have spanned everything from video games to cartoons to music to books to an assortment of goods. While we had a US-produced ***Sonic*** cartoon running for a while, fans begged for the release of the anime version for years, and now, ADV Films has filled that request. Finally, a far superior, more interesting, better quality animated showing of Sonic and his pals would finally be seen by American eyes! Things couldn't be better, right? Not so fast. Wow.. this anime is.. uhm.. not good. I love Sonic - he is, in my honest opinion, by far the coolest game mascot character, and the world that he lives in is just screaming for an awesome anime to be made from it. Unfortunately, this isn't such an anime. What's disappointing about ***Sonic the Movie*** reads like a list of it's basic elements: the art and animation are simple and minimalistic (and not in a good way), the action and pacing are chaotic, the story isn't all that exciting, and the English voice acting got annoying pretty quickly (though, no matter my disagreeing friends, I thought Tails' voice was cute). To be honest, it's almost as if there wasn't a huge budget for this one, and the creators didn't have their hearts into the project, which is really a shame. I'd watch this over the US cartoon any day, mind you, and I think younger viewers out there might really get a kick out of ***Sonic the Movie***. But for the older, more jaded anime fans, watching this may do little more than make you really upset that Sega didn't make sure their beloved hedgehog was done more justice. ***- shidoshi***









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Anime Drive-In

Compiler

Comedy • OAV • ADV Films • 15+
60 min • Sub | Dub • VHS | LD | DVD

B-

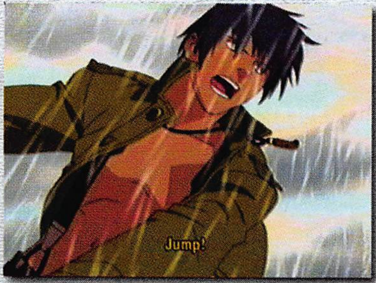
Forgive me if I'm a bit rough here, but I'm counting on the back of the package to help me with the story to ***Compiler*** (which I'll explain why in a moment). It seems that a world of two-dimensional beings has discovered our universe, and they decide to send a beautiful duo to prepare our world for conquest. But our lovely evil girls, Compiler (the destroyer) and Assembler (the creator), decide that they like our 3D world far better and choose to have fun and shack up with two brothers instead of doing their job. Unhappy over this decision, their bosses decide to not only have the Earth exterminated, but the girls as well. ***Compiler*** is ... weird. On one hand, I want to like it, but on the other, it's got some large strikes against it. The biggest thing to stand out is that there's no real explanation of the story, the background of the characters, or what exactly it is that is going on, so the entire time we are following along without really being sure what we're following. The first episode is pretty damn funny, with some truly wacky scenes and situations that had me constantly laughing. The second episode, however, was a more serious "character development" episode, and felt a bit out of place coming right after the first. Then there is the art style and quality, which while generally not bad, is really atrocious when it came to certain character designs and scenes. So, what's my final verdict? If you're familiar with the ***Compiler*** manga, you might get more out of this than I did. For me, however, after watching this one, it was fun, but did little to make it stand out from a plethora of other "sexy comedies" in my eyes. ***- shidoshi***















Blue Submarine No. 6

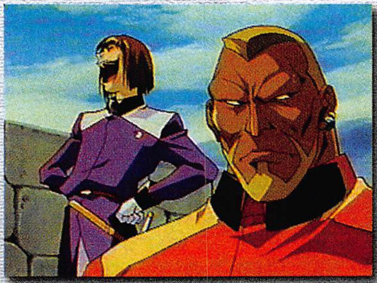
Adventure • OAV • Bandai • 13+
30 min • Sub | Dub • VHS | LD | DVD

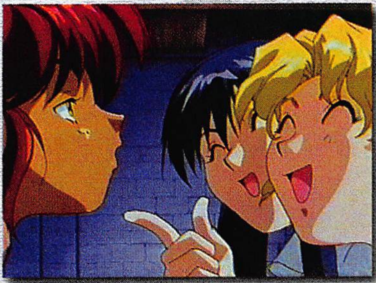
B+

Blue Submarine No. 6 - the story of a future where much of the Earth is covered by the rising oceans, and mankind must not only struggle against their changing planet, but an alien race who wishes to see us exterminated. Mankind's fate rests on the shoulders of "Blue Submarine No. 6," a hi-tech vessel helmed by a crew of mismatched individuals who must learn to work together in order to protect their home. Sound a bit familiar in plot to shows such as Macross or Evangelion? Not bad company to run with, if you ask me. ***BSN.6*** indeed has a certain feeling and atmosphere the reminds me of those you... that sort of larger than life, "there's much more going on here than we really know" feeling. This comes about partially because of the atmosphere and direction, making even a simple scene on the beach seem far more important and mystical. Supporting the mood is a cast of characters that are interesting both in their personality and design. With so much seeming to be so right about ***BSN.6***, it is unfortunately marred with a tragic curse - heavy integration of computer graphics, a problem that has become far more prevalent as of late. Sometimes CG can be mixed with hand-drawn animation to produce something cool, I won't deny that fact. But with ***BSN.6***, there is just SO much CG being used that the hand drawn elements - which are done really well - end up seemingly like more of a novelty. This isn't an anime, it's a CG show with animated characters. Even so, I still must recommend ***Blue Submarine No. 6*** to fans out there. The CG aspect is a hard one to swallow, but everything else really clicked with me. I don't have to like the CG, but I'll deal with it. ***- shidoshi***











Midnight Panther

Action • OAV • US Manga • 16+
60 min • Sub | Dub • VHS | LD | DVD

B

Who would you think of when looking for someone to carry out a dirty deed for you? A group of three cute singers called the Pussycats? Almost no one would expect such innocent girls to be brutal killers, and it's exactly that which would bring their downfall. Lou, Kei, and Sonya are the Midnight Panthers - a team of assassins who will go after anyone for the right price. Whomever it is that they are hired to kill, their targets cannot escape from either their sultry charms and deadly skills. That is until they are hired to kill the king of the Blue Dragons, a person that Lou has a deep, dark connection to in her past. How does she know him, and will her bond with him keep her from completing her mission? ***Midnight Panther*** falls into a genre that I'm not always comfortable with - a non-hentai (adult) show that has a lot of hentai aspects to it. I'm all for mixing in some hentai elements, but when you put in too much it sometimes feels to me like the anime is cheapened. Giving it a bit of thought, though, I guess I could look at it another way and say that if you are going to have a hentai title, it might as well have a decent storyline and cast to make it interesting. So in that regard, if naughtiness in your anime is something you don't like, then you'll want to stay away from this one. However, if hentai doesn't turn you off, then I'd recommend giving ***Midnight Panther*** a shot. In terms of it's other aspects, it is certainly deserving of some credit. It's a fun little show, the characters (both good and evil) are very likable, the art and animation are pretty darn good throughout it's entirety, and the dub isn't too shabby. I can't say for certain that I would really be interesting in seeing ***Midnight Panther*** be a multiple-volume series - I'm not sure if it has the lasting strength for such a thing - but for what it is now, I enjoyed the time I spent with it. ***- shidoshi***

Weather Woman

Dark Comedy • Movie • Asia Pulp Cinema • 18+
84 min • Sub | Dub • VHS | LD | DVD

B+









Weather Woman is one of the first titles from Central Park Media's new "Asia Pulp Cinema" line - if their first few releases give us a hint at what this label will be bringing us, I'm going to LOVE these guys. Anyhow, we are introduced to a lovely young lady named Keiko, whose goal is to get the most out of life that she can possibly get. When she is given the chance to fill in for the sick weather woman on a local TV station, she makes sure she isn't forgotten - by flashing her underwear to the entire public! The ratings soar, and the naughty weather woman Keiko is the star of the station. There's only one problem - Kaori, the daughter of the owner of the station, detests Keiko's delinquent style of doing things, and vows to turn her stardom into suffering. Keiko and Kaori then get into a struggle over not only control of the weather report and it's viewers, but the very elements themselves. If this sounds a bit like a certain anime/manga title you might know as ***Weather Report Woman***, well.. that's because it is indeed a live personification of the infamous manga. This movie is bizarre, peculiar, naughty, downright gross in a few parts.. and I loved every minute of it! It's got that wonderful campy quality of movies from people such as Russ Meyer or John Waters, those kinds of films where you honesty have no clue what could happen next (and it's usually something you couldn't have expected). I've always been the type who digs movies that many would find downright odd, and ***Weather Woman*** certainly fits into that category. Kei Mizutani is wonderful as Keiko, and you can't help but fall for her sadistic yet lovable over the top attitude. If you're looking for something different - really different - then I would really recommend ***Weather Woman***. It's not for everyone, certainly not younger viewers, but I'm sure many of you out there will appreciate it as much as I did. ***- shidoshi***

AF News Service



Quick Headlines

Manga Video has picked up the rights to ***Street Fighter Alpha***, ***Astro Boy*** (the 80's color series), and the ***Magic Night Rayearth*** OAV series. They add these titles to upcoming X/1999, ***Perfect Blue***, the Castle of Cagliostro re-release, and the Eva movies to have a STRONG line-up for next year. • Save Our Sailors (an online Sailor Moon website) recently reported that the live-action ***Sailor Moon*** movies that Disney was planned has been killed. Supposedly, Disney and Kodansha could not agree on all of the details. • AnimeVillage (Bandai's US anime leg) announced that they will finally be releasing their anime on DVD. The first two to make the digital leap will be ***Cowboy BeBop*** and ***Outlaw Star***. • Joining AnimeVillage in comitting to DVD is Media Blasters. So far, they have announced that ***Kite*** (YEA!), ***Ninja Cadets***, and a "Best of Kitty" collection (with ***Orchid Emblem***, ***Advancer Tina***, and ***Battle Team Lakers EX***) will be the first titles they release on DVD. With these two announcement, the entire US anime DVD scene is almost completely covered! • ***Escaflowne: A Girl in Gaea***, the ***Escaflowne*** movie, will be released theatrically in Japan, Korea, and the United States next year. • Pioneer is working with Japanese production house AIC to co-produce two new titles. First up is a new six-volume ***Sol Bianca*** OAV series, which will see an almost exact day and date release both in Japan and the US. Along with that, Pioneer and AIC will be working on a sequel to ***Armitage the Third***.

The New Parasite in Town

You've played the game, now see the movie - ADV Films recently announced that they will be bringing out the Japanese live-action movie based on the Japanese horror novel "Parasite Eve." The movie is somewhat based on the famous novel by Hideaki Sena, which was also the inspiration for the VERY loosely based (to the point of being more a side-story) Square-created "RPG/Adventure/Horror" game of the same name. This is great news for US fans, as up until now the only thing that has been accessible for English-speaking fans has been the game. Now, we'll be able to get a better look into the characters and storylines that were the original inspiration.

Pioneer Takes Akira Digital



Quite possibly one of the biggest shockers is that Pioneer announced at the recent AnimeExpo that they now have the rights to both ***Akira*** and ***3x3 Eyes***. Even better, both are being planned for not only re-release on VHS, but DVD as well! This is great news, as ***Akira*** is probably one of the most-wanted anime DVD releases that there could be - and if any title screamed to be on the new digital format, it's ***Akira***. However, before you get too excited, don't look for these until next year, or even possibly 2001 (why does that still sound like it's so far away?) due to the production involved around the re-release.



Eva Movies Come to US

If there's any one question that I get asked about a thousand times more than any other, it's "When are the ***Evangelion*** movies coming to the US?" The asking of that question is usually followed up by a barrage of nagging and comments which - I swear - make it sound as if it's personally my fault that they haven't come to our shores yet. Well, beat me senseless with the question no longer - Manga Entertainment is about to make a zillion otaku in the US have a reason to live again. Thanks to them, ALL of the ***Evangelion*** movies will be seeing release in the US.

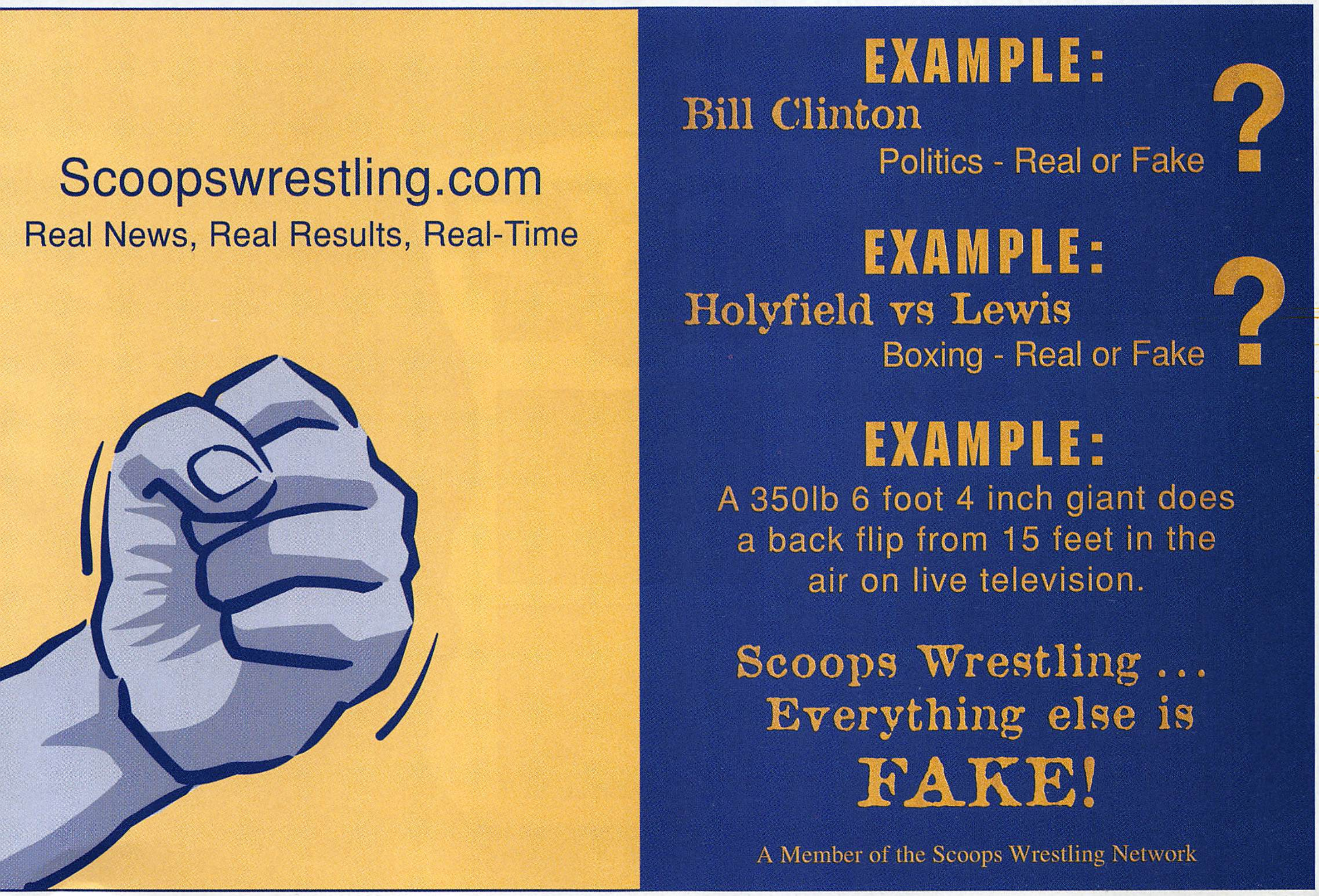
But wait, that's not all. Manga worked hard to make sure that the original voice cast who did the ***Evangelion*** dub for ADV Films returns to do the dubs for the movies, which is either a good thing or a bad thing depending on what your opinion of the dub was. Either way, though, it's nice to have the consistency there. Even bigger news, Manga plans to release the Evangelion movies in select US theaters at some point next year.

Macross Flies Again

AnimEigo recently announced that they have obtained the licensing to release the original ***SDF Macross*** TV series here in the US. What's the big deal, I can already watch that show on the Cartoon Network, I hear you say. Ah! Sure, you can, but you can't watch the original, unedited, uncut, un-"huge storyline changed" version that AnimEigo will be bringing us! That's right, now you'll get a chance to see the ***Macross*** TV series the way it was MEANT to be seen, transferred from new digital masters and presented subtitled only. The entire TV series will be released in one large chunk, and AnimEigo expects the release to come in either late spring or early summer of next year. In order to set the price and amount of copies they will produce, AnimEigo is currently running a pre-sell campaign on their website (similar to what they are doing with the ***Urusei Yatsura*** and ***Kimagure Orange Road*** box sets). The good news (or bad, depending on your format of choice) is that the DVD sign-ups are absolutely killing the VHS sign-ups, making the DVD box release (and final price) look very positive. Either way, if you're interested in getting in on the pre-ordering and hopefully saving a bit of money instead of buying the ***Macross*** TV release retail (which won't even start to be released until Winter of 2000), then head over to AnimEigo's website and get signed up!



Advertiser's Index



Hocus Pocus

codes, cheats & strategies

Welcome to the pages of cheats, codes, and hints galore!!! Upon these leaves you will find all the assistance you'll need for the hottest games today. Not satisfied? Need help on another game? No problem! If you need codes or hints on any game, mail GameFan, or e-mail hocuspocus@gamefan.com. Now, travel with thy controller in hand, to a place where cheaters prosper...

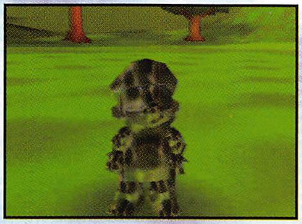


Code of the Month!

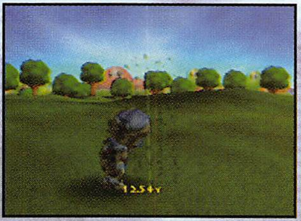
Mario Golf

Play as Metal Mario

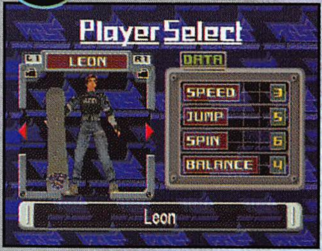
To play as a metallic version of Mario, you have to get 108 birdie badges!





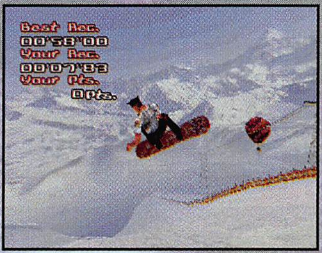


Trick 'N Snowboarding *Extra Resident Evil Characters!*



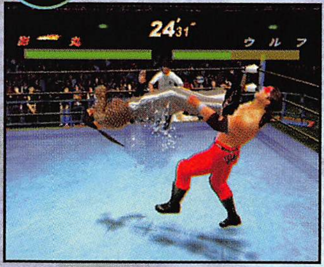






Snowboarding and survival horror? Well, not quite, but if you want to play Leon, Claire, or even a Zombie in the game (who has the worst stats), at the Title Screen press Triangle, Triangle, X, X, Square, Circle, Square, and Circle. You should hear a confirmation sound if you input the code correctly. Then go into Free Mode and press either L2 or R2. Now you can select from Leon, Claire, and Zombie.

Giant Gram (DC Import) *Alternate Virtua Fighter Costumes*



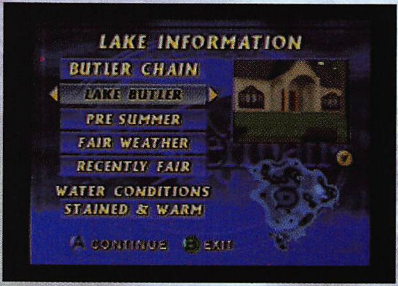


Not only do Wolf, Jeffry, and Kage make an appearance in *Giant Gram*, but they can change into their other outfits! At the character selection screen, highlight Wolf, Jeffry, or Kage. Then, hold R and press A to enable the alternate costumes from *VF3tb*.



In Fisherman Bass Hunter







Cheat Codes

Enter the following codes on the Cheat Code screen:

ALLDLAKES - All Lakes
ALLDCASH - Lots of cash
HYPERBOAT - Super Fast Boat
BAGDSNAGS - No snags while fishing
NOPENALTY - No penalties in tournament mode
MONDOFISH - Huge Fish
SUPERLURE - Easier to catch fish
SUPERSTRING - Unbreakable string
HAPPYFISH - Makes fish more active
RUBADUBDUB - Turns boat into a bathtub
HEADADBIGA - Big headed fisherman



Ehrgeiz

Hidden Intro Sequence

Load the game and do not press any buttons on the controller. Allow the introduction sequence to play four times uninterrupted. Then, enter the "Movie Player" screen, highlight the "Opening Movie" selection and press Right to access the new "Extra Opening" selection.

Metal Slug: First Mission

Play as a Girl

To play as the girl soldier, beat the game once. She will be selectable when you start a new game.

Fatal Fury: First Contact

Play as Alfred

To play as Alfred (i.e. Real Bout FF Dominated Mind), get to the 8th stage without continuing or losing a round. Then beat the opponent with a S.Power 5 times. Once done, Alfred will challenge you. Beat him and he will be selectable.

Mario Golf

Unlocking Mario and His Pals

While you can play most of the characters in a multi-player game, in order to play the following characters in a one-player game, meet the following conditions below. And good luck, because this game is one joystick-tosser.





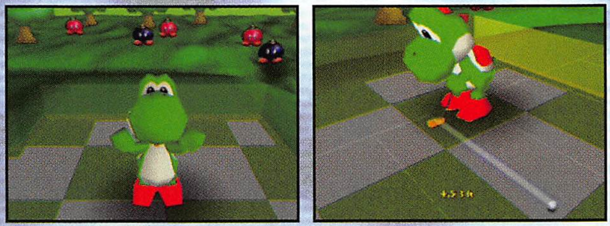
Play as Luigi

To play as Luigi, you simply must beat him in Versus mode.



Play as Mario

To play as everyone's favorite plumber, get Harry, then beat Mario in Versus mode.



Play as Yoshi

To play that happy-go-lucky dinosaur, you must have Luigi selectable, then defeat Yoshi in Versus mode.



Play as Bowser

To play as Bowser, get Mario, then beat Bowser in versus mode. By the way, Bowser cheats, BIG TIME!



Play as Sonny

To play as Sonny, you must have Yoshi selectable, then beat Sonny in Versus mode.



Play as Donkey Kong

To play as Donkey Kong, collect thirty coins in Ring Mode.



Play as Wario

To play as the anti-Mario, get Sonny, then beat Wario in Versus mode.



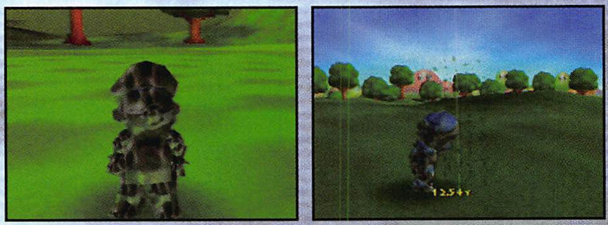
Play as Mable

To play as Mable, collect fifty coins in tournament mode.



Play as Harry

To play as Harry, you must have Wario selectable, then beat Harry in Versus mode.



Play as Metal Mario

To play as a metallic version of Mario, you have to get 108 birdie badges!

GameShark Codes

Tron Ni Kobun
PlayStation Import

Startup Code
D001277A 1040
8001277A 1000

Max Zenny
800C91CC 967F
800C91CE 0098

Infinite Energy
800C9220 10F0

Max Energy
800C9222 10F0

Infinite Time
800C91C0 001F

Vandal Hearts 2
PlayStation Import

Enable Code
D00C49A2 1040
800C49A2 1000

Max Gil
80105F00 967F
80105F02 0098

1 Fight Level Up
B0140080 0000
3011401E 0063

Level 99
B0140080 0000
3011401C 0063

Max HP
B0140080 0000
8011402C 03E7
B0140080 0000
8011402E 03E7
B0140080 0000
80114032 03E7

Max MP
B0140080 0000
80114034 03E7
B0140080 0000
80114036 03E7
B0140080 0000
8011403A 03E7

All Armor & Items
3010B685 0009
B0A40002 0000
8010B686 0909

Driver
PlayStation

No Damage
8009AEE0 0000

Felony Bar Is Empty
800973C8 0000

Stop Timer
800C6E62 D600
800C6E64 0F28

Enemy Cars Are Dead
8009D274 5050

Nitro Boost (press Select +Triangle)
D0096DB4 0110
8009AE54 FFFF

Have All Flags
800C6C94 0064

Enable All Tracks
800964A0 0004

Enable View Credits
800863DC FFFE
800863DE FFFF

Enable Invincibility
80086414 FFFE
80086416 FFFF

Enable No Police/Immunity Cheat
8008644C FFFE
8008644E FFFF

Enable Rear Wheel Steering Cheat
80086484 FFFE
80086486 FFFF

Enable Mini-Cars Cheat
800864BC FFFE
800864BE FFFF

Ape Escape
PlayStation

Infinite Health
800EC2C8 0005

Infinite Lives
800F448C 0064

Infinite Air
800F4DC8 0258

Only Need to Catch 1 Monkey to End Level
800F44B6 00CE

Max Gold Triangles
800F44B8 0063

Timer is 0:00:00
800F4490 0000

Have All Gadgets
D00F51C4 0003
300F51C4 00FF

Infinite Explosive Shots
8007AB14 2400

Infinite 3-Way Shots
8007AB54 2400

Lunar: Silver Star Story Complete
PlayStation

Instant Level Up To 99
800282CE 2400

Infinite Health In Battle (All Characters)
80030660 0055

Infinite Magic In Battle (All Characters)
8002E7E6 2400

Walk Thru Walls
80066716 2400

Infinite Money
801DC37C FFFF

Legend of Mana
PlayStation Import

LP (Press L2+R2)
D0053DDA 0003
801174E4 03E7
D0053DDA 0003
801174E6 03E7

EP (Press L2+R2)
D0053DDA 0003
801174E8 03E7
D0053DDA 0003
801174EA 03E7

GP (Press L2+R2)
D0053DDA 0003
80117574 03E7
D0053DDA 0003
80117576 03E7

AP (Press L2+R2)
D0053DDA 0003
8011C504 00FF

Attack 100%
80117590 0064

Defense 100%
80117592 0064

Croc 2
PlayStation

Infinite Lives
80076AC0 0009

Max Lives
80076ABC 0009

Max Crystals
D0076B4C 0000
80076B4C 0063

Always Have Key
80076B54 0001

Ridge Racer Type 4
PlayStation

Unlock Extra Trial
800F3B24 0001

Complete Extra Trial
800F3B2C 0101
800F3B2E 0101

Unlock All Team DRT Cars
800F3AE0 FFFF
800F3AE2 FFFF
800F3AE4 FFFF
800F3AE6 FFFF
800F3AE8 FFFF
800F3AEA FFFF
800F3AEC FFFF
800F3AEE FFFF

Unlock All Team MMM Cars
800F3AF0 FFFF
800F3AF2 FFFF
800F3AF4 FFFF
800F3AF6 FFFF
800F3AF8 FFFF
800F3AFA FFFF
800F3AFC FFFF
800F3AFE FFFF

Unlock All Team PRC Cars
800F3B00 FFFF
800F3B02 FFFF
800F3B04 FFFF
800F3B06 FFFF
800F3B08 FFFF
800F3B0A FFFF
800F3B0C FFFF
800F3B0E FFFF

Unlock All Team Solvalou Cars
800F3B10 FFFF
800F3B12 FFFF
800F3B14 FFFF
800F3B16 FFFF
800F3B18 FFFF
800F3B1A FFFF
800F3B1C FFFF
800F3B1E FFFF

All Tracks Unlocked
800F3ADC FFFF
300F3B24 0001
800F3B28 0101
800F3B2C 0101

Infinite Tries
800AD698 0303

WWF Attitude
PlayStation

Infinite Attribute Points
80069950 0000

Infinite Time Out of Ring
D0038C04 1021
800EC1A0 0359

Infinite Energy
D0038C04 1021
800EC2A4 0000
D0038C04 1021
800EC2A6 0000

Jade Cocoon
PlayStation

Infinite Empties
8008B818 FFFF

Have All Valuables
8008B81C FFFF
8008B81E FFFF
8008B820 FFFF

Max Exp
8008BD3E FFFF

Infinite HP
8008BD40 03E7

Infinite Yan
8008B594 FFFF

Mario Golf
Nintendo 64

Luigi
810C28E8 0004

Sonny
810C28EA 0006

Harry
810C28EC 0008

Yoshi
810C28F6 0005

Wario
810C28F8 0007

Mario
810C28FA 0009

Donkey Kong
810C28FC 000B

Maple
810C28EE 000A

Bowser
810C28F0 000C

Metal Mario
810C28FE 000D

Have All Characters
50000E02 0001
810C28E4 0000

Command & Conquer 3D
Nintendo 64

Brotherhood of NOD
Max Cash
810C50AE FFFF
810C50B0 0001

Max Power
810C50CE FFFF
810C50D0 0001

Instant Build Units
810C50BE FFFF

Instant Build Vehicles
810C50C2 FFFF

Instant Build Aircraft
810C50BA FFFF

Instant Air Strike
800962A4 0032
800C4FF8 00FF

Instant Nuclear Strike
800962A6 0034
800C5018 00FF

Instant Ion Cannon
800962A5 0033
800C4fd8 00FF

GDI
Max Cash
810C4F06 FFFF
810C4F08 0001

Max Power
810C4F26 FFFF
810C4F28 0001

Instant Build Units
810C4F16 FFFF

Instant Build Vehicles
810C4F1A FFFF

Instant Build Aircraft
810C4F12 FFFF

Instant Air Strike
800962A4 0032
800C4E50 00FF

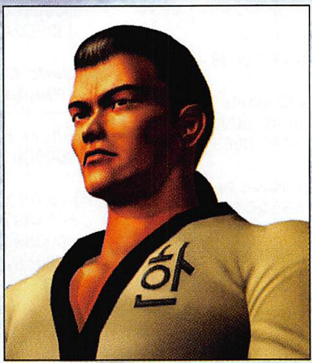
Instant Nuclear Strike
800962A6 0034
800C4E70 00FF

Instant Ion Cannon
800962A5 0033
800C4E30 00FF

TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT

While most of the characters in Tekken Tag Tournament have retained most of their old moves, all the characters have many new moves in Tekken Tag Tournament. Most of these new moves involve using the Tag button. And guess what? Here they are!

LP = Left Punch
RP = Right Punch
LK = Left Kick
RK = Right Kick
Tag = Tag button
Neutral = joystick at center (neutral) position
"During sidestep" = sidestep (quickly tapping up or down twice)
"While standing" = crouch, and as you stand up, perform the command



Baek Doo San

Throws

Snake's Revenge
(close to left side of target) LP + LK or RP + RK

Snake's Revenge Tag Throw
(close to left side of target) LP + LK + Tag or RP + RK + Tag

Hunting Serpent
(close to right side of target) LP + LK or RP + RK

Parrying
(only against punch attacks) hold back + LP + LK or hold back + RP + RK

Parrying Flamingo
(only against punch attacks) tap back + LP + LK or tap back + RP + RK

Arts

One Two Butterfly Kicks
LP, RP, LK, LK, LK, RK

One Two Butterfly Needle
LP, RP, LK, LK, LK, hold down, RK

One Two Black Widow
LP, RP, LK, LK, RK, RK, LK

One Two Silver Mantis
LP, RP, LK, LK, RK, RK, RK, LK

One Two Wing Blade
LP, RP, LK, RK, LK, Tag

One Two Flamingo
LP, RP, LK, hold forward or back

Stealth Needle
hold back, LP

Lace Hammer
(during sidestep) LP

Bone Stinger
Hold diag. up/forward + RP

Bolt Cut
hold back + RP

Launching Rocket
LK, RK, LK, Tag

Wind Blade
hold forward, neutral, hold down, tap diag. down/forward + LK, Tag

Launching Rocket
hold diag. up/forward, neutral, LK, hold down, RK, LK, Tag

Snake Rocket
tap down, LK, LK, LK, Tag

Heel Axe
hold diag. down/back + RK

Heel Lance
hold back + RK

Lightning Halberd Flamingo
LK + RK + tap forward or backward

10 Hit Strings

RK, LK, LK, RK, LK, LK, LK, RK, LK, LK

RK, LK, RK, LK, LK, LK, LK, LK, RK, LK



Michelle Chang

Throws

Blizzard Suplex
(close to left side of target) LP + LK or RP + RK

Southern Cross Suplex
(close to right side of target) LP + LK or RP + RK

Arts

G-Clef Cannon
LP, LP, LP, Tag

Flash Uppercut
Hold forward + LP, Tag

Machine Gun Cannon
LP, RP, LP, Tag

G-Clef Cannon
Hold diag. down/forward, LP, LP, Tag

Burning Palm Crush
(during sidestep) LP

Slash Upper To G-Clef Cannon
RP, LK, LP, LP, Tag

Lashing Arrow
Hold forward, tap forward, RP

Slow Power Punch Combo
Hold diag. down/forward, RP, LP, Tag

Thrust Fist
Hold down, tap diag. down/forward + RP

Tequila Sunrise Combo
(while standing) RP, LP, LP, Tag

Snake Step
(during sidestep) RP

Inner Palm Crush
(during sidestep) RP, LP

Tiger's Claw
Hold diag.down/forward LK + RK, Tag

Ultimate Cannon
LK + RP, LP, Tag

10 Hit Strings

RP, LP, LP, RP, LK, LK, RP, LP, RK, LK

RP, LP, LP, RP, LK, LK, RP, LK, RP, LP

RP, LP, LP, RP, LK, LK, LK, RK, RK, LP



Armor King

Throws

Reverse Death Valley Bomb
(close to left side of target) LP + LK or RP + RK

Heavy Fall Reverse DDT
(close to right side of target) LP + LK or RP + RK

Mount Position
(on downed opponent) hold diag. down/back + LP + LK or hold diag. down/back + RP + RK

Choke Sleeper (CS)
(close to opponent) hold forward, neutral, hold down, tap diag. down/forward LP + RP

Falling Sleeper Chain Throw (FSCT)
(CS) LK + RK, LK + RK, LP + RP

Triple Mount Punches
(only after FSCT)
LP, LP, LP + RP

Stretch Muffler (only after FSCT)
LK, RK, LP + RP, LK + RK

Half Nelson Press
(CS) RP + RK, LP + RP, LP + RP

Arts

Shadow Lariat
Hold forward, neutral, down, down/forward + LP

Water Parting Chop
Hold back + LP

Lifting Elbow
(while standing) LP

Palm Upper
hold forward, neutral, hold down, hold diag. down/forward + RP

Crouching Uppercut
tap down, tap diag. down/forward + RP, Tag

Uppercut
(during sidestep) RP

K's Flicker
hold forward, forward + RP, Tag

Corporate Elbow
hold down + LP + RP

Toll Kick
hold back + LK

Blind Kick
(when back is to enemy) LK

Jumping Knee
hold forward, neutral, hold down, hold diag. down/forward + LK

Low Drop Kick
Hold diag. down/back + RK

Neck Cutter Kick
LK + RK

Exploder
Hold forward, forward + LK + RK

10 Hit Strings

LP, RP, LP, LP, RP, RK, RK, RK, LP, RK

Gun Jack

Throws

Gun Bomb
(enemy crouched) hold down + LP + LK, or hold down + RP + RK

Arts

Piston Gun
Hold back + LP + RP

Piston Gun Assault
Hold back + RP

Piston Gun Snipe
(during sidestep) RP

10 Hit Strings

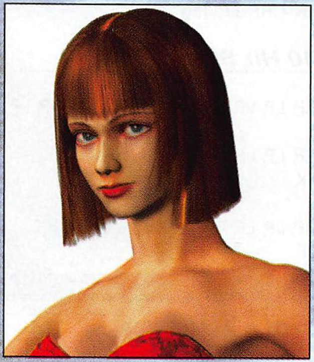
hold diag. up/forward, LP, LP, RK, LK, RK, LP, RP, LP, LP+RP, LP + RP

hold diag. up/forward, LP, LP, RK, LK, RK, LP, RP, LP, tap down, LP + RP, LP + RP

hold down, RP, LP, LP, LP, RP, LP, RP, LP, LP + RP, LP + RP

hold down, RP, LP, LP, LP, RP, LP, RP, LP, tap down, LP + RP, LP + RP





Anna Williams

Throws

Serpentine Arm-Break
(close to left side of target) LP + LK or RP + RK

Torso Splitter
(close to right side of target) LP + LK or RP + RK

Arts

Fatal Attack Combo
Diag. up/forward, LP, LK

Assassin's Dagger
Hold down, hold diag. down/ forward, hold forward + LP

Scarlet Rain
Hold diag. down/back + LP

Left Spin Low Kick to Right Uppercut
Down + LK, RP, Tag

Slice Shot
(during sidestep) LK

High Flip Kick
(while crouching) up + RK, Tag

Wine Opener
Hold diag. down/forward RK

10 Hit Strings

LP, RP, LP, RP< LK, LK, RP, LP, RP, RK

Bryan Fury

Throws

Neck Throw
(close to back side of target) LP + LK, Tag or RP + RK, Tag

Gravity Blow
(close to left side of target) LP + LK or RP + RK

Knee Blast
(close to right side of target) LP + LK or RP + RK

Arts

Chopping Elbow
Hold back + LP

Chopping Elbow 2
Hold back + LP, Tag

Left Upper
(while standing) LP, Tag

Stomach Blow
Hold diag. down/back + RP

Mach Kick
Hold forward, forward + RK

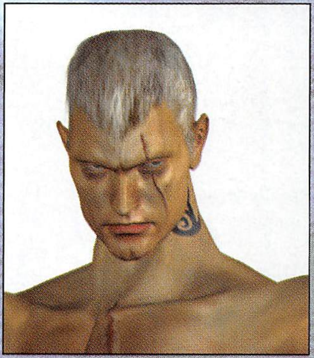
Parrying
Hold back + LP + RP

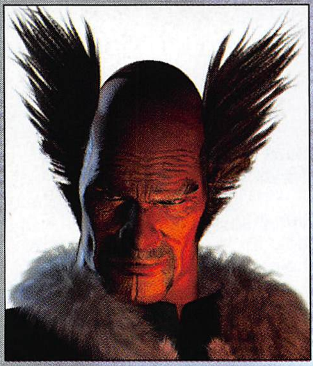
10 Hit Strings

hold back, LK, RK, LP, RP, LP, RK, RP, LP, RK, RP

hold back, LK, RK, LP, RP LP, RK, RP, RK

hold back, LK, RK, LP, RP, LP, RK, LK, RK





Heihachi Mishima

Throws

Neck Chopper
(close to left side of target) LP + LK or RP + RK

Free Fall
(close to right side of target) LP + LK or RP + RK

Arts

Fake Excitement
LP, RP, RP, LP + RP, hold up or down

Twin Pistons
Hold diag. down/forward, LP, RP, Tag

Alter Splitter
Hold back + LP

Demon Uppercut
Hold forward, forward + RP, Tag

Dark Thrust
(while standing) RP

Rising Uppercut
Hold forward, neutral, hold down, hold diag. down/forward + RP, Tag

10 Hit Strings

hold forward, forward, RP, LP, RP, RP, LK, RK, RK, LP, RP, LP

hold diag. down/forward, LK, RP, RP, RK, RK, LP, RP, LP, RP LP

hold diag. down/forward, LK, RP, RP, RK, RK, LP, RK, LP, RP, LP

hold diag. down/forward, LK, RP, RP, RK, RK, LP, RK, LP, RP, RK

Ganryu

Throws

Upper Stream Throw
(close to left side of target) LP + LK or RP + RK

Upper Stream Throw 2
(close to left side of target) LP + LK, Tag or RP + RK, Tag

Crotch Throw
(close to right side of target) LP + LK or RP + RK

Crotch Throw 2
(close to right side of target) LP + LK, Tag or RP + RK, Tag

Pedal Press
(close to back side of target) LP + LK, or RP + RK

Twin Wall
(only against punch attacks) Hold back, LP + LK, or hold back, RP + RK

Arts

Sumo Pop Up
Hold back, diag. down/back, down, tap diag. down/forward + LP, Tag

Falling Hammer
(during sidestep) LP

Salt Upper
Hold back + RP, Tag

Sumo Rush
Hold forward + LP + RP

Pedal Press
(during sidestep) LP + RP or hold down + LP + RP

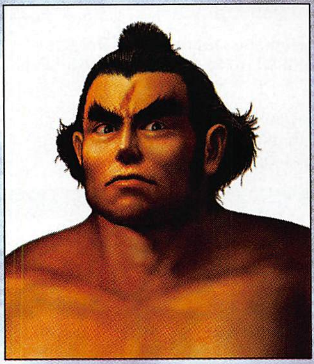
Sit
LK + RK

Sit Thrust
(during Sit) LP

Sit Sweep
(during Sit) RP

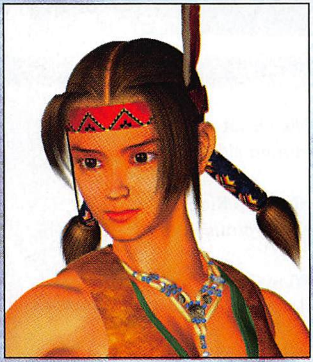
Splits
(during Sit) hold down

Sumo Tackle
Hold back + LP + RP



Tackle Fake Upper
(during Sumo Tackle) RP

Splits
(during Sumo Tackle) hold down



Julia Chang

Arts

G-Clef Cannon 2
LP, LP, LP, Tag

Machine Gun Cannon 2
LP, RP, LP, Tag

Flash Uppercut
Hold forward, LP, Tag

Slow Power Punch Combo
Hold diag. down/forward, RP, LP, Tag

Tequila Sunrise Combo
(while standing) RP, LP, LP, Tag

Parting Fist
(during sidestep) RP

Shove It Up
Hold forward, LP + RP, Tag

Liquid Sweep
Hold back, LK

Mountain Crusher
Hold diag. down/forward, RK, RP, hold back, tap forward, LP

Heaven Shatter Kick
Hold back + RK

Ultimate Cannon
LK + RP, LP, Tag

10 Hit Strings

RP, LP, LP, RP, LK, LK, RP, LK, RP, LP

RP, LP, LP, RP, LK, LK, RP, LP, RK, LK

RP, LP, LP, RP, LK, LK, LK, RK, RK, LP

Jun Kazama

Throws

Cloud Taste
(left side of target) LP + LK, or RP + RK

Wind Wheel
(right side of target) LP + LK, or RP + RK

Cherry Blossom
Tap back + LP + RP

Arts

Demon Slayer
Hold forward + RP, Tag

Demon Slayer Cancel
Hold forward + RP, hold Down

Dragon Wheel Kick
Hold back + LK, Tag

Dragon Wheel Kick Demon Slayer
Hold back + LK, RP, Tag

Moon Scent
(while standing) LK, Tag

Moon Scent 2
(while standing), tap back + LK, Tag

Funeral Palm
Tap diag. Down/back + RP, Tag

Swallow Mallet Elbow
(during sidestep) RP

Swallow Mallet Elbow
(during sidestep) RP, LP + RP

Grace
(during sidestep) RK

Mist Palm Thrust
Tap forward, hold forward + RP

Violent Strength
(while standing) LP

Inner Strength
LP + RP

10 Hit Strings

(while standing) + RP, LP, LP, LP, RP, LP, RK, LK, LK+RK



(while standing) + RP, LP, LP, LP, RP, LP + RK, LP, LK + RK



Ling Xiaoyu

Arts

Cross Lifting Palms
Hold diag. down/forward + RP, LP

Cross Lifting Palms 2
Hold diag. down/forward + RP, LP, Tag

Birds Flock
LP + RP

Fire Dancer
(crouching) LK, RP, LP, RK, Tag

Phoenix Twin Kick
Hold back + RK

Art of Phoenix
Hold down + LP + RP

Wave Crest-Power
(During Art of Phoenix) LP + RP, Tag

Wave Crest-Heavy
(During Art of Phoenix) hold down, LP + RP, Tag

Rain Dance
Hold back, LK + RK

Dark and Stormy Mistrust
(during Rain Dance) RP, LP, RK, Tag

Mistrust
(During Rain Dance) RK, Tag

Guard Breaker
(During Rain Dance) hold down + RK

10 Hit Strings

Hold up, RK, LP, RP, LP + RP, LP, LP + LK, RK, RK, RK, LP

Hold up, RK, LP, RP, RK, RK, RP, LP + RP, LP, RK, RP

Yoshimitsu

Arts

Stone Fist to Side Spin
Hold back + LP, LK + RK

Inner Palm
(during sidestep) LP

Step In Upper
Hold diag. down/forward + RP

Step In Upper 2
Hold diag. down/forward + RP, Tag

Shrine
(during sidestep) LP

Cyclone Lift
Hold down, LP + RP

Spirit Shield
Hold diag.down/back + LP + RP

Kangaroo Kick
RK, LK, Tag

Zag Kangaroo Kick
RK, LK + RK

Zag Kangaroo Kick 2
RK, LK + RK, Tag

Whirlwind
(during sidestep) RK

Poison Wind to Kangaroo Kick
Diag. up/forward, LK + RK, LK + RK, LK + RK

Poison Wind to Kangaroo Kick 2
Diag. up/forward, LK + RK, LK + RK, LK + RK, Tag

Indian Stance
(laying on back) LK + RK

Flea
Hold up, LP + RP

Skull Splitter
(during Flea) LP + RP

Indian Stance
(during Flea) tap down, LK + RK

10 Hit Strings

LP, RP, LP, RK, RP, RP, RP, RK, RP, RP

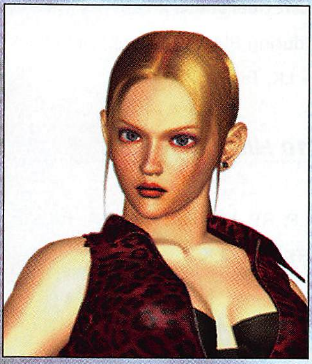
LP, RP, LP, RK, RK, RK, LP, LP, LP, LP

LP, RP, LP, RK, RK, RK, LP, RK + LK



RK, RK, RP, RP, RK, RK, LP, LP, LP, LP

RK, RK, RP, RP, LP



Nina Williams

Throws

Hammer Throw
(close to right side of target) LP + LK, Tag or RP + RK, Tag

Jumping Flip
hold diag. up/forward + LP + RP, Tag

Arts

One Two Spike Combo 1
LP, RP, LK, LK, RP, Tag

One Two Spike Combo 2
LP, RP, LK, LK, RK

One Two Spike Combo 3
LP, RP, LK, LK, hold down + RK

One Two Left High Right High
LP, RP, LK, RK

Cross Blade
diag. down/forward + LP, RP

Snake Shot to Rolling Death
(during sidestep) LP, tap forward

Snake Shot to Reverse Rolling Dash
(during sidestep) LP, tap backward

Double Shot
(during sidestep) LP, RP

PK Rush 1
RP, LK, LK, RP, Tag

PK Rush 2
RP, LK, LK, RK

PK Rush 3
RP, LK, LK, hold down + RK

PK Rush 4
RP, LK, RK

PDK Combo to Right Upper
RP, tap down + LK, RP, Tag

Spike Combo to Right Uppercut
LK, LK, RP, Tag

Creep Rush 1
hold diag. down/forward, LK, RP, LK, LK, RP, Tag

Creep Rush 2
hold diag. down/forward, LK, RP, LK, LK, RK

Creep Rush 3
hold diag. down/forward, LK, RP, LK, LK, hold down + RK

Creep Rush 4
hold diag. down/forward, LK, RP, LK, RK

Hopping Low Kick to Right Uppercut
hold diag. up/forward, neutral, tap down + LK, RP, Tag

Left Spin Low Kick to Right Uppercut
down + LK, RP, Tag

Spider Knee
(while standing) LK

Blonde To Right Uppercut
RK, LK, RP, Tag

10 Hit Strings

LP, RP, LP, RP, LK, LK, RP, LP, RP, RK

LP, RP, LP, RP, LK, LK, RP, LP, RK, LK

LP, RP, LP, RP, RK, LK, RK, RP, RK, LK

LP, RP, LP, RP, LK, LK, RP, LP, RK, LK

Forest Law

Throws

Knee Life
Hold forward, forward, LK + RK, Tag

Arts

Dragon Storm
hold back + LP, RP, LP, Tag

Junkyard Kick
hold back + RP, LK, RK, Tag

Dragon Uppercut
(while standing) RP, Tag

Dragon Judgement
(while standing) RP, LP, RP, LP

Dragon Hammer
hold forward + LP + RP

High Kick to Somersault
LK, RK, Tag

Step in Combo
tap diag. down/forward + LK, LK, LK

Side Kick to Somersault
(while standing) LK, RK, Tag

Low Kick to Somersault
(crouching) LK, RK Tag

Catapult Kick
tap up + RK, Tag

Back Flip
LK + RK, Tag

Fake Step
tap back + LP + RP

Fake Step Uppercut
(during Fake Step) RP, Tag

Fake Step Low
(during Fake Step) LK

10 Hit Strings

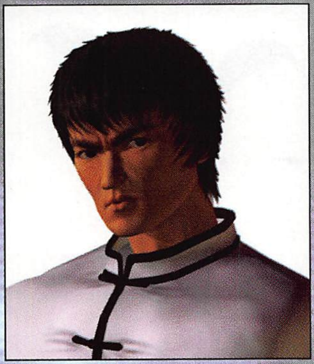
hold diag. down/forward, LP, RP, RP, LP, LK, LK, LK, RK, LK, RK

hold diag. down/forward, LP, RP, RP, LP, LK, LK, LK, LK, RK, RK

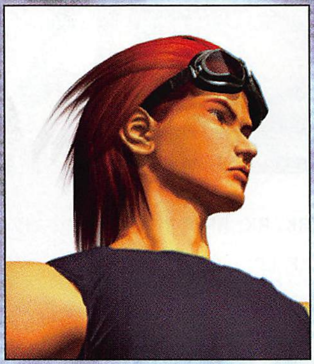
hold diag. down/forward, LP, RP, RP, LP, LK, LK, LK, RK, RK, RK

hold diag. down/forward, LP, LK, RP, RP, LK, hold down + LK, LK, LK, RK, RK

hold diag. down/forward, LP, LK, RP, RP, LK, hold down + LK, LK, RK, LK, RK



hold diag. down/forward, LP, LK, RP, RP, LK, hold down + LK, LK, RK, RK, RK



Hwoarang

Throws

Falcon Dive Kick
RP + RK

Human Cannonball
hold forward + LK + RP

Arts

Sky Rocket
hold forward, neutral, down, diag. down/forward, RK, Tag

Fire Cracker
hold down + RK, RK, Tag

Motion Switch (switches Left or Right Stance)
LK + RK

Machine Gun Kicks
(in Left Stance) LK, LK, LK, LK, Tag

Smash Low Right High
(in Left Stance) hold down + LK, RK

Plasma Blade
(in Left Stance with back turned) RK, Tag

Right Flamingo Feint
(during Left Stance) hold forward, neutral, RK

Right PK Combo
(during Right Stance) RP, LK

Right Reverse Kick Combo
(during Right Stance) RP, RK, RK

Right Jab Spin Kick
(during Right Stance) RP, hold back + RK

Right Reverse Kick Combo Right Flamingo
(during Right Stance) RP, RK, tap forward

Plasma Blade
(during Right Stance with back turned) LK, Tag

Right Side Kick
(during Right Stance) hold diag. down/forward + RK

Left Flamingo
(during Left Stance) hold forward + LK

Right Flamingo
(during Right Stance) hold forward + RK

Flamingo Side Kick Combo
(during Left Flamingo) LK, RK

Right Heel Lance
(during Left Flamingo) hold back + RK

Right Heel Lance 2
(during Left Flamingo) hold back + RK, Tag

Left Hell Lance
(during Right Flamingo) hold back + LK

Left Heel Lance 2
(during Right Flamingo) hold back + LK, Tag

10 Hit Strings

LP, RP, LK, RK, LK, RK, RK, RK, RK, LK

RP, RP, LK, RK, LK, RK, RK, RK, RK, LK

Eddy Gordo

Throws

Rio Deal
(left side of target) LP + LK

Rio Special
(left side of target) RP + RK

Arts

Mirage
Tap diag. Down/forward + LK + RK, Tag

Heran Bago – Relaxed
LK, LK

Vasuuna
Tap any up direction + LP + RP

Asfixiante
Tap back + RP

Combo Jilar
LP, RP, RK

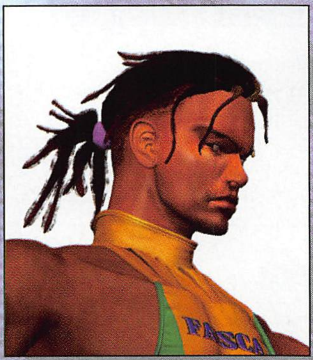
Banda
(during sidestep) LP + RK

Haule
(crouching) tap diag. Down/back + RK

10 Hit Strings

RK, LK, RK, RP, RK, LK

RK, LK, RK, RP, RK, RK, LK + RK, LK + RK, LK + RK, tap diag. down/back LK + RK, tap diag. up/forward + LK + RK



Lei Wulong

Throws

Double Foot Stomp
LP + LK, Tag

Arts

Drunken Tiger Lash
Tap back + LP, hold forward

Breaking Rush
Tap forward, neutral, RP, LP, RP, RK

Breaking Rush – Crane
Tap forward, neutral, RP, LP, RP, RK, hold up or down

Breaking Rush Low Kick
Tap forward, neutral, RP, LP, RP, LK

Drunken Rapid Fists
(during sidestep) RP, RP, hold forward

Twin Snake Strikes
Tap forward + LP + RP

Twin Snake Strikes - Crane
Tap forward + LP + RP, hold forward

Twin Snake Strikes - Panther
Tap forward + LP + RP, hold up or down

Drunken Tiger Lash
Tap back + LP

Drunken Tiger Lash – Drunken Master
Tap back + LP, hold forward

Falling Blade
(during sidestep) LK + RK

Back Turned
Tap back + LK + RK

Reverse Uppercut
Back Turned, RP, Tag

Drunken Master Walk
Tap forward + LK + RK

Drunken Tiger Lash
Drunken Master Walk, LP, hold forward

Drunken Rapid Fists
Drunken Master Walk, RP, RP

Drunken Rapid Fists
Drunken Master Walk, RP, RP, hold forward

Tiger Sip
Drunken Master Walk, LP + RP



10 Hit Strings

LP, RP, LP, LK + RK, RP, LP, RK, LP, RP, LK

LP, RP, LP, LK + RK, RP, LP, RK, LP, RK, RK

LP, RP, LP, LK + RK, LK + RK, LK + RK, LP, LP, RP



Paul Phoenix

Arts

Turn Thruster
(during sidestep) LP

Thunder Palm
(while standing) RP

Pump In Pedal
(during sidestep) LK

10 Hit Strings

LP, RP, LK, LP, RK, RP, LP, RK, RP, LP

LP, RP, LK, LP, RP

LP, RP, LK, RP, LP, RP, LP, RK, RP, LP

King

Arts

Diving Body Press
Tap forward, hold forward + RP + LK

Rolling Sobat
Tap forward + RK

Blind Kick
Hold back, hold forward + LK

Elbow Hook
Tap diag. Down/forward + LP, RP

K's Flicker
Tap forward, forward + RP, Tag

Crouching Uppercut
Tap down, diag, down/forward + RP, Tag

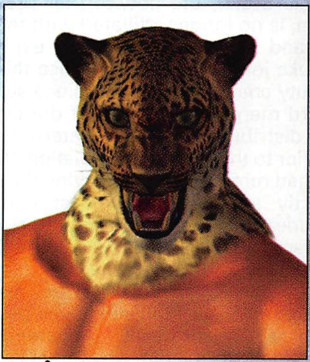
Black Bomb
Tap forward, down, diag. Down/forward, neutral + LP + RP, Tag

10 Hit Strings

LP, RP, LP, LP, RP, RK, RK, RK, LP, LP

LP, RP, LP, LP, RP, RK, RK, RK, LP, RK

LP, RP, LP, LP, LK, LK, RK, LK, RP, LP + RP



LP, RP, LP, LP, LK, LK, RK, RK, LP, LP

LP, RP, LP, LP, LK, LK, RK, RK, LP, RK

Jin Kazama

Arts

Parting Wave
Tap back + LP

Parting Wave 2
Tap back + LP, hold diag. down/forward

Corpse Thrust
Diag. down/back + LP

Twin Pistons
(while standing) LP, RP, Tag

893P Knee Kick
tap forward, RP, RK

Laser Scraper
Tap back, hold forward + RP, LP, hold diag. down/forward + RP, Tag

Uppercut
(while standing) RP, Tag

Tooth Fairy
(during sidestep) RP, Tag

Demon Steel Pedal
Tap back + RK

Electric Rising Uppercut
Tap forward, neutral, tap down, hold diag. down forward, RP, Tag

Rising Uppercut
Tap forward, neutral, tap down, tap diag. down/forward, RP, Tag

10 Hit Strings

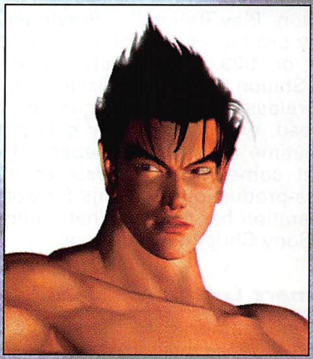
LK, RP, RK, LK, LP + RK, LP

LK, RP, RK, LK, LP + RK, RP, RP, LP, RP

Tap back + RP, RK, RK, RK, RK, RP, LP + RK, RP, LP

Tap back + RP, RK, RK, RK, RK, RP, LP + RK, RP, tap down + LK + RK

Tap forward, hold forward + RP, LP, RP, RP LK, RK, RK, LP, RP, LP



Tap forward, hold forward + RP, LP, RP, RP, LK, RK, RK, LK, RP, LP

Tap forward, hold forward + RP, LP, RK, RK, RP, RK, LK, RP, LP

Stolar No More

As we go to press, this last minute news came in, dropping a bomb in the office. Effective August 11th, Teshiro Kezuka has been named vice-chairman and COO of Sega of America aka Head Honcho at Sega. Bernie Stolar, the now-former president of Sega, is no longer affiliated with the company, and as yet, nobody can explain why. Kezuka joined Sega of America this year as deputy chairman, and has since served as a board member and head of domestic sales and distribution for Sega Enterprises, Ltd.

Prior to this shocking revelation, there were hushed rumors of Stolar leaving the company shortly after the Dreamcast launched in America this September. But being replaced a mere month before the release of Sega's most important console yet... this was unforeseen by anybody. When reached for comment, Sega representatives gave us the expected "no comment." Apparently gamers will be left speculating why Stolar is no longer with the company. Let's hope this news doesn't shake the confidence of potential Dreamcast buyers and investors, or Little Timmy might not get that little white box he's been hoping to see in his Christmas stocking.

No PS2 for you

As if the industry needed more speculation at this point... here's the latest word on the 'next' PlayStation (2). Ken Kutaragi, COO of SCEI, was recently quoted as saying "the numbers one, two, and three will not be significant for the release of the next generation PlayStation." Previously, major Sony products have come out on dates like 12/3 or 1/23. This could mean that the PlayStation 2 (not the official name) will not be released by Christmas as planned. Instead, we can probably expect to see it sometime next year in Japan. This statement comes on the heels of rumors of mass-production problems for Sony's next-generation hardware. What a lump of coal for Sony Christmas stockings.

Gamers Left in the Dark?

A big rumor going around which isn't going to make anybody happy is that Rare's falling behind schedule with *Perfect Dark*. There's a strong possibility that the pseudo-sequel to *GoldenEye* will not meet its deadline of Christmas. Considering the unfathomable success of *GoldenEye* (#1 selling console game two years in a row), Rare's probably committing to delivering an A+ title, not just content to rush it out the door. In fact, word has it that members of Rare's other development teams are being pulled off of projects like *Conker's* and *Jet Force Gemini* in order to get *Perfect Dark* out in time. This would explain the recent delay of *Jet Force Gemini*'s release date to October 11th and Conker's disappearance from the face of the planet (don't worry, he's still out there... somewhere... along with *Robotech: Crystal Dreams*, but he's out there). Another disappearing stocking stuffer, for Nintendo fans now?

Sega's Long-Term Vision

At Sega's coin-op distributor meeting, Mr. Isao Okawa (Founder, Chairman, and C.E.O., Representative Director Chairman of CSK Corporation, Sega Enterprises, Ltd.) gave a speech revealing some insights on Sega's future plans. Highlights include: Sega's desire to release 30 arcade titles next year, most of which will be Naomi-based (can you say direct DC port?). Also, the Heat-based gaming network for the DC is supposed to allow players at home to challenge people in the arcade... over 200,000 people online at the same time! In addition to more DC games being network compatible, there's talk of a DC camera and microphone before Christmas—this could allow sausages to teleconference and send video E-mail with their Dreamcasts! Also, it's rumored that Sega is planning to change its name to "sega.com," as we usher in an era of a new Sega!



Seaman sighted!

It's the breaking of the seventh seal. The apocalypse is coming... *Seaman*, the Japanese fish/man/Tamagotchi, pet-raising, microphone-using, talk-back-to-you 'game,' is coming here?! Sounds too bad to be true, but if the rumors become real, a U.S. publisher will be picking up the rights to this very, very strange... 'game' <shiver> What next? Konami releasing *Guitar Freaks* here? And I thought I'd heard the last of those bad Seamen jokes...

Pocket-Size Pak & Hedgehog

The NeoGeo Pocket Color is goin' old school with the announcement of *Pac-Man* and a brand new *Sonic* game coming to SNK's handheld wonder. The Pac-Attack begins August 31 and Sonic should be spinning your way by the end of the year. Looks like this is another step in the right direction for SNK's budding alliance with Sega. You already know that the NGPC is compatible with the DC version of *King of Fighters Round 2*.

Soul Calibur Updates Up the Wazoo!

When we noticed that the DC version of *Soul Calibur* looked markedly better than the arcade, we couldn't believe our eyes. Apparently someone at Namco realized that no consumer's going to spend money playing an arcade game, when there's a superior version at home, right? Well, that's fast being remedied with an arcade update of *Soul Calibur*, which will run on Naomi hardware, and which will have all the Dreamcast improvements incorporated. No word yet on whether it'll have anything extra in addition to that.

But wait, there's more! The DC version of *Soul Calibur* will also be receiving updates via the Dreamcast's modem. Supposedly, gamers will be able to visit Namco's website to download updates to *SC* beginning September 10th. What can we expect to see the day after we buy our DC's? New stages and some alternate title screens. Let's just hope that the console modem doesn't lead to the ugly PC trend of companies publishing unfinished games before Christmas, and then releasing countless patches later when the game is 'really done.'

Time to Get a Passport

The first shots of the U.S. DC's modem in action have been released on the Internet. These screens show the program which will let gamers surf the Web with their Dreamcast; it's supposed to be called Dream Passport, which is the name of the Japanese counterpart of the same program.

Rent a Who Two?

Rent A Hero, the MegaDrive RPG, is purportedly getting a sequel on Dreamcast. This should be great news for all five of you who actually played it! But if you're sitting there scratching your head right now, maybe this'll help—Sega's AM2 division is working on it after *Shen Mue*. There's no word yet on a release date, but you can bet it's sometime next year, and we haven't heard the last of this one.

Can't Get Enough of You, Baby

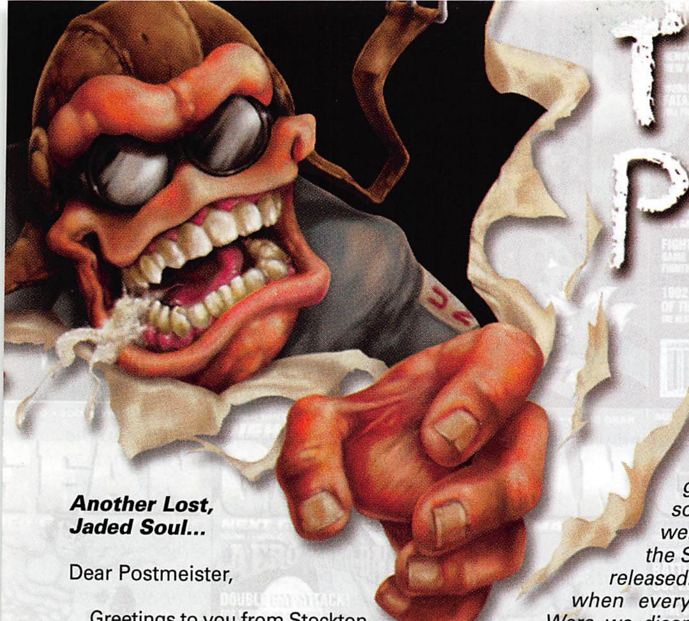
It's sequel mania in the video game industry, and two of the most popular titles around are getting sequels soon: *Marvel Vs. Capcom* and *Mario Kart 64*. Word on the Capcom fighter is that it'll be out in arcades by the end of the year, and we'll probably see a DC rev next year. As for Nintendo's popular kart-racer, a little birdy told us that Pikachu and Kirby will be playable. Does that mean you can run Pikachu off the road? Sign us up!

Capcom Spawns New Arcade Game

Spawn will be hitting arcades later this year and the Dreamcast in the second half of next year. The game, a first person shooter, is based off the popular comic book hero created by Todd McFarlane. Running on Naomi hardware, it should play similar to the arcade game *War*, which lets you network arcade cabinets together so multiple people can run around and shoot their friends... in the same game environment. Of course, we all know this is just a game... right?!

The French are Coming!

French companies Ubi Soft and Infogrames are both bringing Japanese Dreamcast games State-side in the near future. Ubi Soft has picked up the rights to *Evolution*, which could be the first RPG released for the U.S. DC. The only competition it has at this point is Interplay's *Baldur's Gate*, which doesn't have a release date yet. Meanwhile, Infogrames has expressed interest in publishing *Pen Pen Trilcelon*, that fruity racer which was part of the Japanese DC's four-game launch lineup.



THE POSTMEISTER!

Write to me, I'm running for president!!!
The Postmeister
6301 DeSoto Avenue Suite E
Woodland Hills, CA 91367

Another Lost, Jaded Soul...

Dear Postmeister,

Greetings to you from Stockton, cultural train-wreck of California. I just picked up the June '99 copy of GameFan and wanted to share a few thoughts about it.

First of all, I am disappointed that your magazine has consistently embraced every single new piece of hardware with open arms. The Dreamcast might be old news to you, but most of us are very wary of another $200.00+ chunk of plastic with the word "Sega" written across the top of it. When I think about how cheated I've been by Sega over the years, every single time I trusted them (with the Genesis being the only notable exception) it makes me feel sick. The Master System was a bust, as was the Sega CD, the 32X, and (in America) the Saturn. I'm sorry, but Sega has done NOTHING to make me believe that the Dreamcast will last longer than a year, maybe two at the most. For all the Dreamcast games you've run articles on I've yet to see a single one that is in the least bit original or revolutionary. It's as if all they can do is produce the same games over and over again with the only real upgrade being the graphics. Am I the only one who is sick of playing games featuring cute characters like Sonic? I love video games, but I'm also 31, not 13.

The only thing that sparks my interest in Dreamcast at all is *Quake 3* and whatever Capcom & SNK come up with for the system. Unless they can do better than that I'll stick with my PS and N64. I've read your magazine since 1993, and although I admire your zeal, it would be of greater service to all concerned if you would learn to be just a bit more critical of the industry. Who would trust a film critic that recommended nearly every film he'd ever seen? I rest my case.

Dan Hettmannsperger III
Stockton, CA.

There's obviously a lot of pent-up anger and frustration welling up within your soul, Sir Dan of the long and difficult to pronounce surname! You must have known that only a master of all five Post-Fu relaxation techniques can ease you out of this jaded frame of mind, taking you on a journey back to days of yore, when gaming was fun and the only reason you looked forward to new consoles was the infinite array of new games, all with improved graphics and sound. Well I've got news for you, pal: The staff of GameFan Magazine is still there... and apparently, even the wiles of an incredibly powerful new console aren't enough to lure you back to the fold. For that, we're very sorry... but we ain't changing our tune just because you've lost the ability to be hard-core, suck it up and buy a new system.

When we look at the Dreamcast (or the PSY, or the Dolphin), we see the potential of newer, better games. Games which look, sound and play phenomenally well. We felt the same way when the Sega-CD, 32x and Saturn were released. Heck, we feel the same way when every new console is released! Were we disappointed that these erstwhile Sega platforms measure up to our lofty expectations? Sure... but we got some pretty excellent games from each one of those platforms. So as far as we're concerned, we got our money's worth. Back in the old country, we had a name for the maneuver you're pulling right now. It was called, 'Cutting your nose off to spite your face.' You feel burned by the Sega of old (Newsflash: Tom Kalinske isn't at Sega anymore; neither is most of the old regime) and you're willing to pass up a killer new console which is getting boatloads of support from both Sega and their third parties, just to spite a multi-million dollar company... all under the guise of being some crusader for video gaming justice. Your loss.

The last paragraph of your letter is where your entire argument breaks down, and you begin to sound like me when I've gone too long without giving someone a good pummeling using El Niño's rubber fish (in other words, a little bit out of your mind!). First, you want to convince me that you're tired of all the "same old, same old" you're seeing on the Dreamcast... and that flawed conclusion alone would ordinarily encourage me to unleash a swift and deadly STB (Steel Toed Boot, if you're nasty). But I see your letter as a cry for help, so I'll relent. But do you seriously expect me to believe that you prefer your regular blend, when Sega's new one is so bold and delicious? "Quake 3 and whatever Capcom & SNK come up with," you say? Yeah, pick the game that started one of the biggest "me too" phenomena in the industry (the first-person shooter), and then follow it up by mentioning two companies known throughout the world as the kings of re-hashing old ideas. Hello!? Picked a real strong closing argument to rest your case on, Matlock... case dismissed!

Tremble Before GameFan's Might...

Greetings Almighty,

First I want to congratulate you and the rest of the GameFan staff for producing the best source of news and information in the gaming world. With your latest issue you erased all the troubled past eighteen months from my memory, and restored GameFan Magazine and Website as my favorites once again. And now to the questions:

1. *Dino Crisis* or *FFVIII*?

2. Besides *NFL2K* and *Ready 2 Rumble* what other DC Games will be worth getting the rest of the year (I already have *MvC*, *VF3TB*, *Blue Stinger*, *Sonic*, *Power Stone*, and soon *Soul Calibur*)

Keep up the good work!

Alf
Via the Internet

You have given me the familiar 'warm and fuzzy' feeling that only exposed electrical wires and blatant butt-kissing can provide. The staff of GameFan and GameFan Online thank you for the praise, though we all note the lack of cookies or valuables of any kind as a show of appreciation for all our hard work, and this has lessened the impact of your posterior-smooching. A lesson learned, now on to your questions!

1. You knew I was gonna waffle on this one, why must you ask me to choose! They are both good. I must play them both. The hard-core in me refuses to make a selection... why do the voices taunt me so! I must locate a canned meat and put it out of its misery as penance for my indecisiveness! Can't you see what you've done to me?!



Brian Parnell sent this as his bid to win my Dreamcast backpack. You, too could be a winner...

2. Now that I've composed myself after the nervous breakdown you caused, forcing me to choose between two good games (much like a fight between Jet Li and Jackie Chan, it is something that should never be allowed to happen), I will do my best to continue. And yet, I see you've thrown up another obstacle... asking me to make a recommendation! Don't you read?! Why do you buy GameFan, and visit our Website? Do we not keep you informed about which are the latest, greatest games? Haven't we helped you make informed buying decisions?

I believe the time has come to invoke the law that has become known throughout the industry as the single most deadly, universally feared acronym the world has ever seen... the P.T.F.F. (Punch That Freak in the Face) law... cower in fear, and prepare to be humbled Alf... I don't care how popular your syndicated television series was, no Q-Bert lookin', shaggy-haired alien gets the best of the Postmeister!

Living In A Fantasy World...

Hey Posty!

I humbly come before you to ask your guidance in a dilemma I have. You see, I am a *Final Fantasy VII* nut. I collect everything from play-

ing cards to magazine ads and display boxes. There is one gaping hole in my ever-expanding collection though. This is where I need to request your infinite knowledge. As I'm sure you know, a while back Square released another version of the game called *Final Fantasy VII International*. It came with four discs. For months now, I have been searching frantically for a copy of it. I have called well over 40 import places, have had people go up to major areas like Little Tokyo in New York City to look for it, ran want ads, ran internet want ads, searched E-bay, and I even hired scouts to search for it all over the country and beyond. I'm at my wits' end! I'M ON THE BRINK OF INSANITY! It's like this game doesn't exist. I've seen screen shots from it and pictures of the cover, so I know it's real. Please grant an insignificant mortal a little bit of peace! I won't be able to rest until I find it. What do you know about this game? Do you know where I might be able to find it? Do you know anyone who has it? I know this may sound dumb, but is it possible to go right to the horse's mouth and get it from Square? I'm willing to give just about anything.

Thank you for listening to my ramblings. I hope you might be able to help a fellow gamer down on his luck. Thanks again... POSTY FOR PRESIDENT!

Rich Russo
Somerdale, NJ

It exists... this much I can tell you. Unfortunately, this game might be a next-to-impossible score for Westerners, because it's been out of print for some time now. Eggo, hard-core Square sausage that he proudly is, would never willingly part with his copy of any Square title. So you're hosed there, and you're doubly hosed because most importers only brought in as many copies as were pre-ordered by their customers... so they're all long since sold out. You have only one last resort, and it ain't one you're gonna like.

Go to your travel agent. Ask for the cheapest, cargo-hold flight to Tokyo you can get (tell them you want the Postmeister special, they'll put you in the heated section reserved for pets) and when you hit the streets of Japan, head straight for Akihabara. Then walk up and down the streets, entering each and every game shop you can find, and browse through their entire selection of what may seem like millions upon millions of games. Ask everyone you meet whether or not they've seen a copy of the game... anywhere. Beg, plead, and try not to look too desperate. Oh yeah, and don't forget to shower... I hear that's important.

Collecting rare items is a difficult and painstaking process... take it from one who knows. My titanic frozen food stockpile contains rare gems from decades past—items which, if eaten, would probably kill a normal human within minutes. It is only my strenuous workout regimen, incredible genetics and cast-iron stomach that allow me to ingest such toxic materials and emerge unscathed, jacked, chiseled, ripped, pumped and primed for my run at the Presidency... your vote counts, Posty-fans!

SNK Digs Into Your Pockets...

Dear Posty,

First, I would like to say that I am humbled by your vast knowledge of the gaming world, and I beg your forgiveness for my ignorance on this subject, but I need some info on the NeoGeo Pocket Color. I am considering buying it just for *Metal Slug* and *Samurai Shodown 2*, but I am reluctant. Here are my questions.

1. Why have I only seen the NeoGeo Pocket Color online and in GameFan? Nobody else seems to know about it or care.

2. I am also afraid that it will succumb to the same fate as the Game Gear. What is the predicted life span of this small and wondrous machine?

3. The reviews in GameFan make the NeoGeo Pocket Color seem like the best portable gaming system yet. Is this true?

4. What are some titles that will be released on the NeoGeo Pocket Color soon? Any chance an RPG might be coming?

Thanks for your time, oh great and wonderful Postmeister!

Scott Fortner
Florence, AL

Ahh, my humble Post-Fu student, it's clear you have been taking my instructions to heart! Your eager prostration before the banquet table of Postal knowledge could not have been more perfectly executed. Though you have come to me without an offering (all this talk of frozen foods has my cast-iron stomach growling a bit), your diligent practice and the harnessing of Post-chi have given me pause for reflection. So step forth from the dank oblivion of your ignorance, and be enlightened!

1. Because GameFan is always the first to embrace the hottest new gaming platforms—as our close, personal friend Dan Ham-n-cheeseburger so rightly pointed out in his letter this month. We saw it, we played it, and we decided it kicked major booty. You're gonna see a lot of our 'competitors' jumping on the NGPC bandwagon real soon, unless I miss my guess... and I never do, because I'm the Postmeister!

2. The projected life span? As long as gamers like yourself get off the fence you're dancing on and buy the thing! The more installed units, the more games that will be produced... and the happier you, we and SNK will all be.

3. Well, that all depends on your perspective. Better sound than the GameBoy, a better screen, some killer games, and an exciting future full of characters from Capcom, SNK, Sega and more! Could it sound any better?

4. There are no "real" RPGs announced at the moment, though we hope to see that changing very soon as more people jump on the bandwagon. The only one we know of right now that comes close to being an RPG is Biomotor Unitron, *and that's more of a Pokémon-style ranching game.*

Now that you've been given the knowledge you so desperately sought on SNK's potent little portable, I expect to receive word that you've done the right thing, bought one, and are loving every minute of your new life together. Woe betide anyone who does not follow the trail which Posty himself hath blazed!

Teaching A New Dog Old Tricks

With the Dreamcast about to be released in the US, and Sega's claim that they aren't about to repeat their mistakes of the past, what are the odds of us true Sega fans finally seeing new versions of popular older games, like *Golden Axe, Altered Beast, Shinobi, Alex Kidd,* and—do I even have to say it—*Phantasy Star*? These games alone would cause a lot of people to buy a Dreamcast, just in preparation for their release. The way I see it, if Sega doesn't want to flop again, they should take gamers back to the good old days when people thought Sega knew what they were doing. At the very least, this would give their truly faithful fans a reason to stick with them even longer.

Mike Webb

I love the sound of entitlement all these letters about Sega seem to carry... "We'd better get some payback for being loyal Sega fans." Be serious, people—you're part of this hobby for the same reasons we are: the games. You buy Sega systems because you love the games that are published for them and that, as the man says, is the bottom line. Sega doesn't have some special reward waiting for the fans that have stuck with the company through all their failed attempts to deliver a bigger, better gaming experience... at least, nothing they don't also have waiting for their newest fans. The Dreamcast is your reward for being a gamer... and it's a pretty sweet one, at that!

However, we can agree on one thing. That list of yours could make for some pretty cool DC sequels. Project Ares *is being done by the same guys who headed up* Phantasy Star, *so we may already have one down. The classics you didn't list which have sequels on the way include such smashes as* Ecco the Dolphin *(which you've no doubt already seen in this very issue),* Chakan: The Forever Man, *and a few others we can't really talk about yet. Trust me, if you're looking for updates of classic Sega titles, the Dreamcast is most definitely your machine!*

As a very quick aside, I feel the need to dispense a little Postal wisdom before I sign off. To all of you who are standing there, arms folded saying something along the lines of, "Sega's got a lot of work to do if they're going to repair their relationship with me," please do the rest of us a favor and get over yourselves. This is all about games, not about the few hundred bucks you blew two or three years ago on a system that didn't live up to its potential. There are those who buy every import console the day it's released, often for close to $1,000 hard currency... and even we have no sympathy for you!



Jon Allegrezza has joined the fray, and his entry is pretty tasty. 9-9-99 is the cut-off for contest entries, so enter and win!


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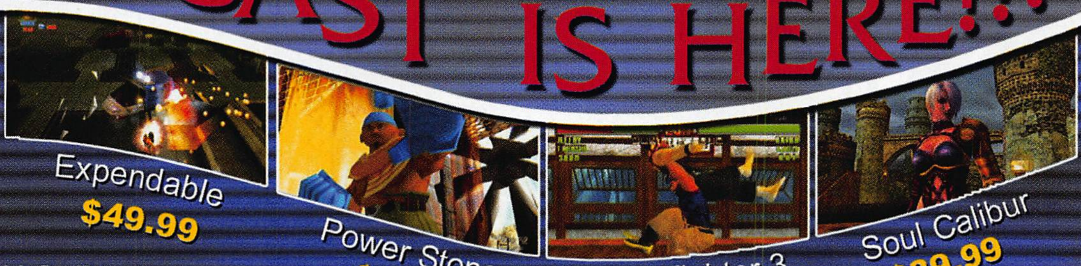
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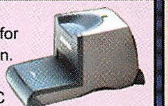
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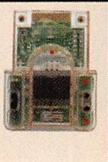
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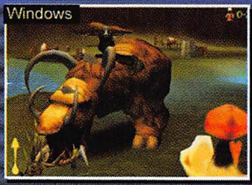
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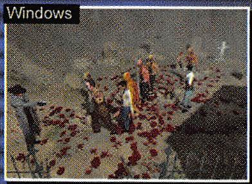
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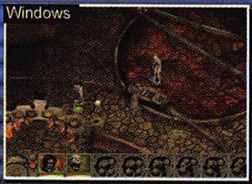
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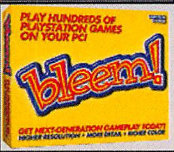
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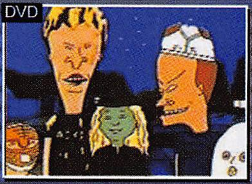
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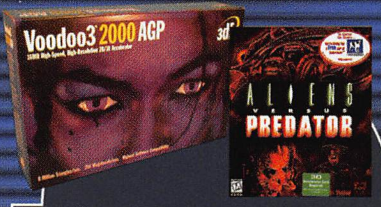


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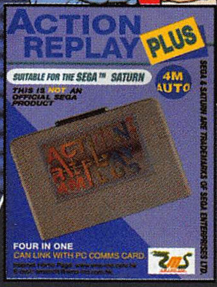




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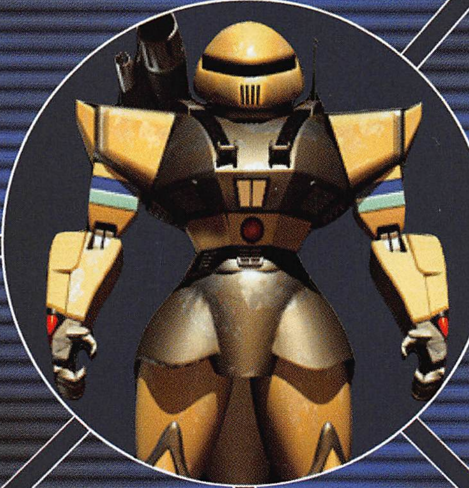
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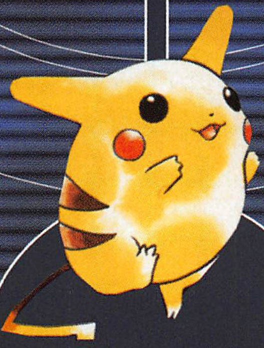
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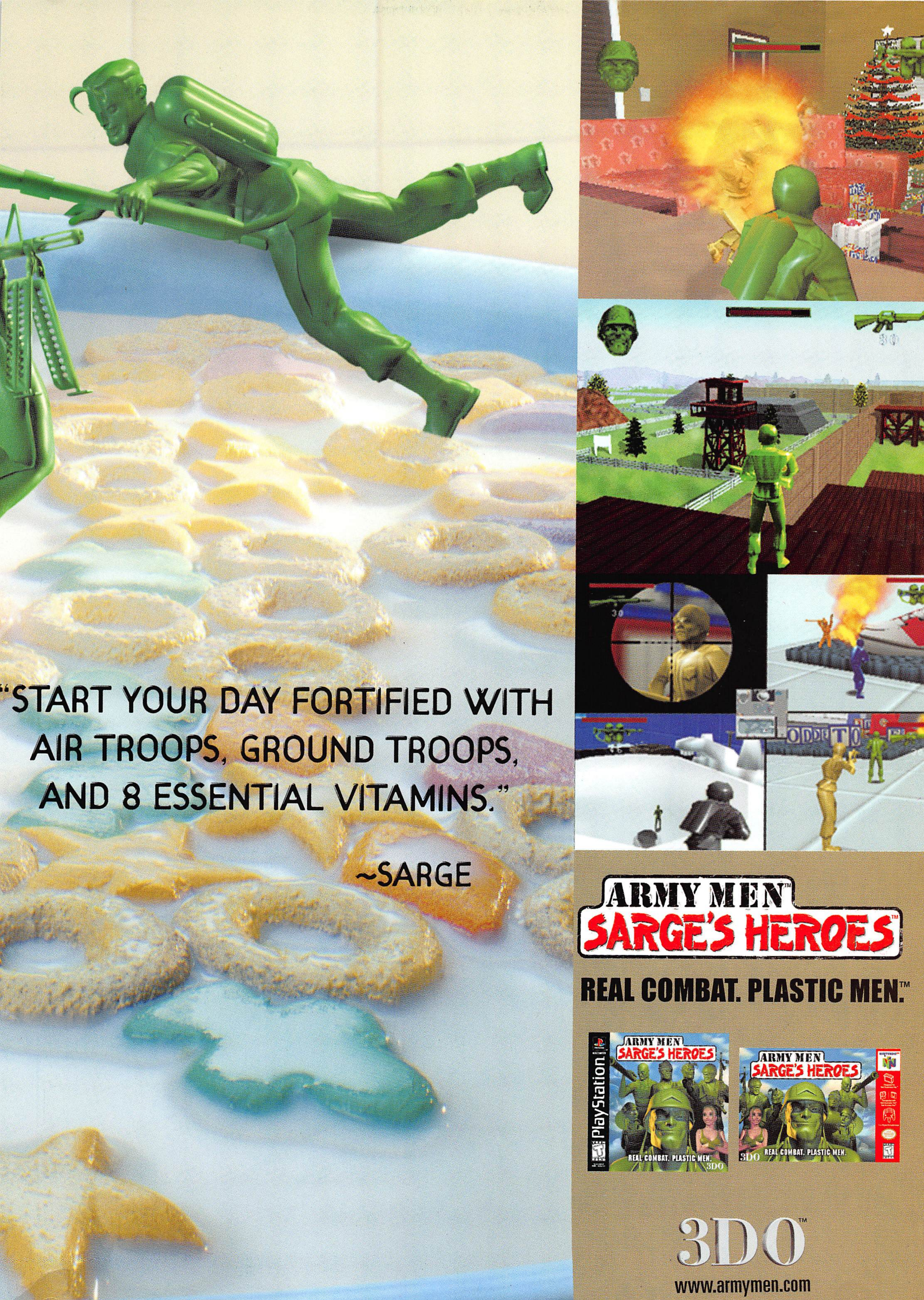
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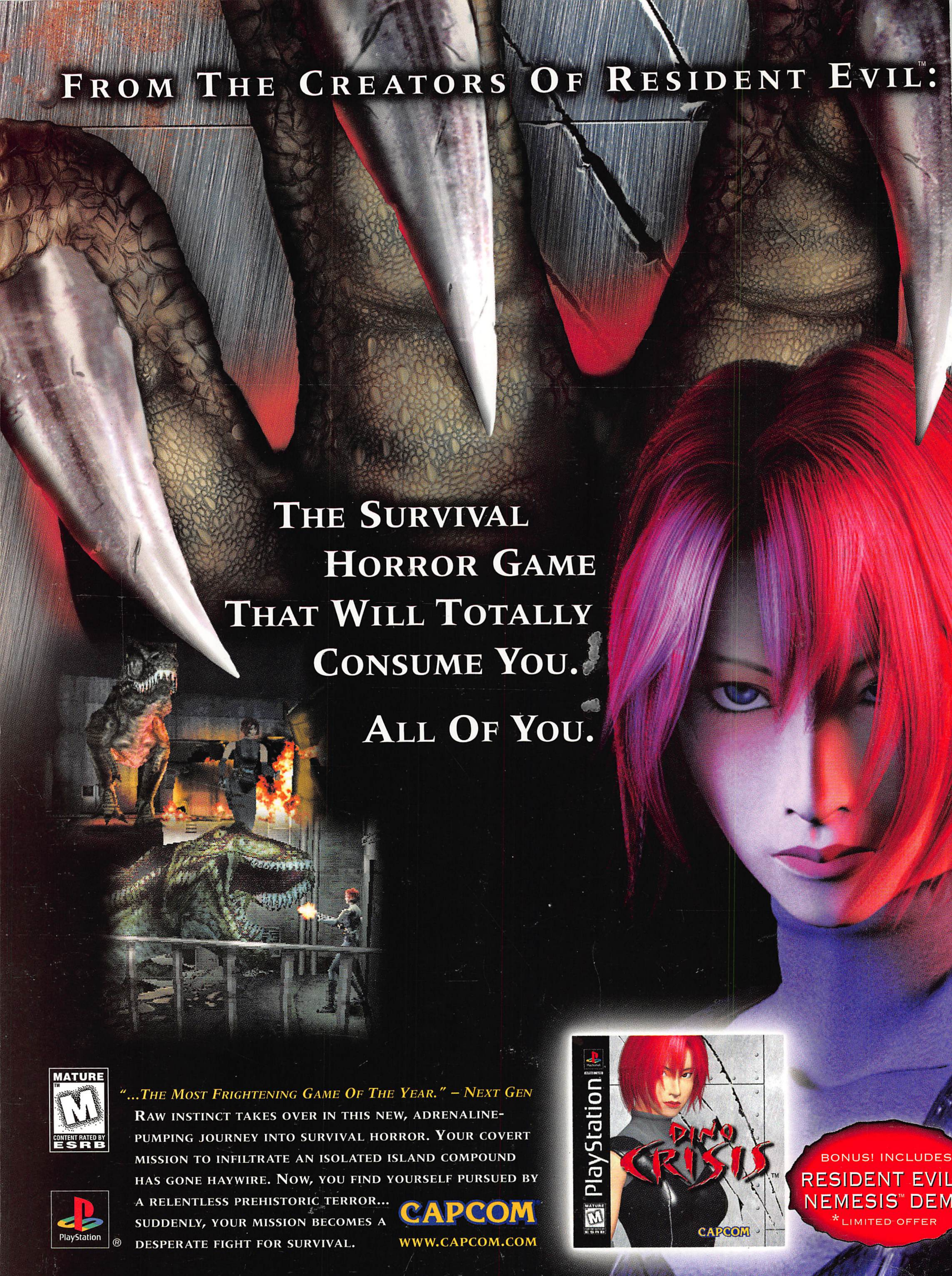
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